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PREFACE.

These Tracts were commenced about six months ago. The controversy respecting the "Essays and Reviews," which has not subsided yet, was then at its height. Clergymen and laymen were told that they must either declare their sympathy with the book openly, or must unite in condemning it.

The writers of these Tracts felt that they could take neither of these courses. They could not declare their sympathy with the book; for it seemed to them almost entirely negative; hinting at faults in the prevalent religious opinions of the day, but not investigating them; hesitating dislike to certain obligations which are imposed upon Churchmen, but not stating or considering what those obligations are; leaving an impression upon devout Christians that something in their faith is untenable, when they want to find what in it is tenable; suggesting that earnest infidels

in this day have much to urge on behalf of their doubts and difficulties; never fairly asking *what* they have to urge, what *are* their doubts and difficulties.

The very same reason which hindered the writers of these Tracts from accepting the teaching of the "Essays and Reviews," hindered them from joining in the popular denunciation of them, or in appeals to ecclesiastical authorities against them. Those denunciations and appeals took an almost entirely negative form. They contradicted and slandered objectors; they were not assertions of a belief; they led Christians away from the Bible to apologies for the Bible, from the creeds which they confess to certain notions about the creeds, from practice to disputation. They met no real doubts in the minds of unbelievers; they only called for the suppression of all doubts. They confounded the opinions of the day with the faith once delivered to the saints. They tended to make anonymous journalists the lawgivers of the Church. They tended to discourage clergymen from expressing manfully what is in their hearts, lest they should incur the charge of being unfaithful to their vows. They tended to hinder all serious and honest co-operation between men who are not bound together in a sectarian agreement, lest they

should make themselves responsible for opinions different from their own.

Such consequences are perilous to the existence of a Church. Every member of a Church is bound to do what in him lies to avert them. The writers of these Tracts might be able to do very little, — might be unworthy to be even pioneers in that work of Reformation which God will accomplish, if we are ever so unwilling to take part in it. But they could not, with safe consciences, stand aloof affecting neutrality, in a time when neutrality is only possible for critics who look down with equal scorn on all parties, who have no sympathy with the deep and strong convictions of any. They felt that it was their business, as far as they could, to have sympathy, and to express sympathy, with the strong convictions of all parties and of all men; to refuse alliance with them only so far as they are negative and contradictory; yet to deal justly and reverently with their negations and contradictions also; to seek the meaning of them for the very purpose of avoiding them. If the writers of these Tracts could in any measure, however feebly, pursue this course, and keep these ends in sight, they might vindicate the liberty and the duty of clergymen to speak what they think, and to let other

men speak what they think; they might show that those who have taken vows under Him who was called a blasphemer and a friend of publicans and sinners — who, in the days of His flesh, was denounced by every section of the religious world — have no right to tremble at the censures of Mobs, of Convocations, even of those ecclesiastical fathers to whom they gladly yield reverence and homage; they might do something to establish that healthy intercourse between clergymen and laymen, between Churchmen and Dissenters, between Christians and unbelievers, which involves no compromises, and which is necessary to the fulfilment of the tasks that are committed to the priests of the land, but which the recent excitement threatens to make impossible; they might lead Christians to feel more sure of the truths which sustain their being, to be less fearful that God may prove weaker than the Devil; they might lead those who are not Christians to perceive that the Gospel dreads no investigation, that it abhors that temper of mind which shrinks from investigation, which is content with appearances, which will not seek for the substance that no changes can affect, no opinions can make less solid and less eternal.

It has been necessary for these objects that

persons should be united as writers who differ in many points of opinion. Their differences, instead of being concealed from the reader, have been obtruded upon him. Tracts have been brought together which are manifestly written by men who have been led by opposite processes of thought to opposite conclusions. To think of these, to compare them, to see how they may consist with a radical union of purpose and principle, is one of the most desirable exercises in this time, one of the greatest counteractions of the Sectarianism which is our curse. It has been a special object of the writers, all of whom have hitherto been members of the English Church, to show that such varieties are not only compatible with her existence, but necessary to it; that if she fall into the condition of a Church standing on opinions, she will renounce her position, and be deserted by God. To shrink from any mutual responsibility which this design may involve, would have been disgraceful cowardice. To incur that responsibility at a time when the editors of anonymous journals are endeavoring to make it dangerous and penal for clergymen to confess what they write before man and God, is a great duty.

This volume of Tracts only touches upon a few of the topics which are most interest-

ing to Englishmen in the present day. It is hoped that hereafter these may be considered more thoroughly and in different lights, and that many questions may be grappled with which have been only approached at a distance. These especially must come under our notice: "Is the humanity which men speak of and worship in this day a practical reality, if it is not connected with a Son of Man?" "Is Christian civilization an obsolete thing, or must it not in this age, more than in any previous one, make its power known, and throw down the mammonism which is opposed to it?" How many points of the most direct, practical, pressing interest are involved in these questions, — what philosophical and theological principles are involved in them, — the reader need not be informed. The writers of these Tracts can only be of the least use to their generation by determining not to separate practical questions from principles; by accepting in all their force the words which proceeded from the divinest lips: "*Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth the truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.*"

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I.

RELIGIO LAICI.

By THOMAS HUGHES,

AUTHOR OF "TOM BROWN'S SCHOOL-DAYS."

I.

RELIGIO LAICI.

All who look at the title of this essay, and then at the name of the writer, have a right to ask why it has been written. They may fairly say, "We can understand why any man who is a finished scholar, who has earned a hearing as a critic or philosopher, should write on these subjects at this time; but a man who is neither a divine, a scholar, a critic, nor a philosopher, what can he have to say? Surely he at least might hold his tongue."

I answer: — "I am no scholar, or critic, I know nothing of natural science, very little indeed of controversial theology. If the controversy had remained in the high regions of scholarship, criticism, or science, no one would have been troubled with any word of mine. I have neither head nor time for such matters. But this is not so. It is time for every man who has a faith, and can get a hearing, to speak out. For the debate has come down to the every-day working world. Men and women occupied with the common work of life — who are earning their bread in the sweat of their brows, and marrying, and bringing up children,

and struggling, and sinning, and repenting — feel that the questions which schoolmen are discussing are somehow their questions. Not indeed in form, for not one in a thousand of the persons whose minds are disturbed just now care to make themselves acquainted with the forms and modes of the particular controversies which are raging. If they try to do so, they soon throw them aside with impatience. They feel, 'No, it is not this. We care not what may be said about ideology, or multitudinism, or evidential views, or cosmogonies. At the bottom of all this we suspect — nay, we know — there is a deeper strife, a strife about the very foundations of faith and human life. We want to know from you learned persons, whether (as we have been told from our infancy) there is a faith for mankind, for us as well as for you, for the millions of our own countrymen, and in all Christian and heathen lands, who find living their lives a sore business, and have need of all the light they can get to help them.'"

It cannot be denied. The sooner we face the fact, the better. This is the question, and it has to be answered now, by us living Englishmen and Englishwomen: the deepest question which man has to do with, and yet — or, rather, therefore — one which every toiling man must grapple with, for the sake of his own honesty, of his own life.

There is nothing to be gained by shutting our eyes any longer to the fact, that doubt as to what answer must be given to this question is very widely spread amongst us. An attempt to answer it — or at any rate

to clear away some of what the authors believe to be hindrances to an answer — has been made by the writers of the Essays and Reviews. In my humble opinion, this attempt is wrong in principle. But I must say that the aim of that book is, not to set up any deistic or pantheistic philosophy in the place of Christianity, but to claim for English Churchmen the right of honest and free inquiry in the realm of nature and the history of man as a necessary step to the spread of a spiritual Christianity. I do not think they have taken the right method of confirming our English faith, or that this book of theirs will confirm it; but I fear nothing from such inquiries. What I do fear is the dishonesty of the attempts which have been made to put them down, and to stifle free inquiry. It is sad to see all our English Bishops, and eight thousand clergymen, trying to make scapegoats of these men, as if they too were not on their trial before God and their country. Let them stand forward and say what they believe, that we may know.

The doubts which have now to be met have, as was sure to be the case, taken more hold on our young men than on any others amongst us. For many years I have been thrown very much into the society of young men of all ranks. I spend a great part of my time with them. I like being with them, and I think they like being with me. I know well, therefore, how rare anything like a living faith — a faith in and by which you can live, and for which you would die — is amongst them. I know that it is becoming rarer every day. I find it every day more difficult to get them

to speak on the subject: they will not do so unless you drive them to it.

I feel deeply that for the sake of England they must be driven to it, and therefore that it is the bounden duty of every man who has any faith himself, and who has a chance of being listened to by them, to speak out manfully what he has to say, concealing nothing, disguising nothing, and leaving the issue to God.

I would ask for a hearing, then, from young men. I will be as short as I can, and as plain as I can. This is no time and no subject for special pleading, and I have no adversaries over whom I want to triumph. Nor is there any question whatever involved in the great controversy, on which I should not be glad to speak out what I think. On the contrary, my whole object is to speak out, openly and affectionately, not stepping lightly over or shirking altogether ground which I know that my hearers believe to be unsound, and unable to bear an honest man's weight. I solemnly declare that I know of none such.

Every man who has watched the signs of the times must have been looking for some such crisis as the present one for years. That which has been called the "negative theology" has been spreading rapidly, though for the most part silently. In the first instance it may have been simply "a recoil from some of the doctrines which are to be heard at church and chapel; a distrust of the old arguments for, or proofs of, a miraculous revelation; and a misgiving as to the authority, or extent of the authority of the Scriptures." But, as was

sure to be the case, the "negative theology" could not stop, and has not stopped, here. Men who have come across these recoils, distrusts, misgivings, will soon find, (as many of you have found,) if they are honest and resolute with themselves, that there is another doubt underlying all these, a doubt which they may turn from in horror when it is first whispered in their hearts, but which will come back again and again. That doubt is whether there is a God at all, or rather, whether a living, personal God, thinking, acting, and ruling in this world in which we are, has ever revealed Himself to man.

This is the one question of our time, and of all times; upon the answer which nations or men can give to it hang life and death.

There are some of you, I fear I may say many of you, who will answer at once, "No; it is not possible; at any rate there has never been such a revelation. What we in England (along with the rest of Christendom) have put forward and upheld as such a revelation, is crumbling to pieces in our hands. It was an invention of man, a nobler invention perhaps than any which went before it, but full of the usual superstitions which broke up all its predecessors, and are now breaking it up." And those amongst you who would say this would point to this volume of Essays and Reviews, and ask how after that we can seriously stand up for the old faith.

It is to these of you that I would in the first instance specially address myself. Let us see how the case stands. I wish to put the case as favorably for you

as I can, with this one remark as to the Essays and Reviews, (which I am bound in justice to the writers to put forward at once and emphatically,) that I do not find in them what you say is there. You say then that this book destroys, or, at any rate, that it has given the finishing stroke to, much old superstition that had stiffened about the religious mind of England, and had made her worship little better than an idolatry. In the first place, the belief in miracles, including the Incarnation of our Blessed Lord, must be acknowledged to be henceforth impossible. For the notion of a domain of intellect and knowledge, in which man can and may use his reason, and a boundless region of spiritual things beyond, which is the sole dominion of faith, — from the threshold of which region reason retires gracefully, admitting that "What is not a subject for a problem may hold its place in a creed," — is too utterly un-English to do more than offer a momentary resting-place for a few timid spirits, who are still encumbered with some of the old trappings.

Then Prophecy must be given up, unless we are content to accept, what you are quite ready to grant us, that what we call prophecies are, generally, noble old Eastern poems, full of symbolism, like other Eastern poems, but referring (so far as they refer to any events at all) to events happening under the writers' eyes.

The Inspiration of Scripture follows. Scholars have already proved beyond a doubt that most of the books were not written by the persons, or at the the times, by whom and at which they profess to have been written.

Every year is knocking greater holes in them, throwing discredit on fresh places in their narrative. If we like to retain them as very remarkable old books of a remarkable people, well and good. You would yourselves probably put them above the Vedas, the Koran, or Homer. But if we claim more than this for them, we must look to it, and not complain at the work of dissection, inspection, analysis, which has to be carried out rigorously, let the results be what they will.

Lastly, although you do not feel so sure on this point as on all the others, you must say the evidence is getting so strong — what with Messrs. Crosse and Weekes's experiments, Mr. Darwin's patient investigations, even Mr. Owen's admissions, which, on such a point, are of enormous value — that we had better give up "creation" altogether. It cannot hold out above a year or two, just long enough to give the philosophers time to finish their experiments. Better give it up at once, and save ourselves humiliations in the future.

I am not aware that there are any other special points which you would press on me. I cannot see why there need be. If one thinks for a moment what is implied in the above admissions, one must at once grant that you have made a pretty clean sweep. Any residuum is not worth haggling over.

Well, I say, be it so. I wish to put myself honestly at your point of view. Let us then give up revelation altogether. It requires a greater effort than I am able to make, but I will do my best. Let the four Gospels first sink into mere legends, and then be lost like a

decade of Livy. Let it come to be utterly denied that there is a Son of Man and Son of God. But let the idea of Jesus, as a beautiful and noble mythical personage, a name to be placed in the same category with, but perhaps higher than, those of Vishnu, Balder, Hercules, float down on the stream of time, to have such effect on the hearts and wills of men as all beautiful and noble ideas will have, and no more. With our Lord must go all belief in a personal God: at least, I do not see myself how any such belief can be then held, and I take it you would not deny that so it must be. You would probably decline, however, to make any confession on this point. The negative theology, infidelity, and orthodoxy of a certain kind here join forces, and you would agree with Mr. Mansel, that, as man *cannot* know God in any such sense as St. Paul and others seem to have believed that he might, it is worse than useless for him to waste any more of his own and the world's time in getting back again and again by different roads to the old impossibility.

Having thus to the best of my power put myself where you wish to put me, given you all you can ask, I must in my turn ask you what you are going to set up instead. You cannot leave me, you cannot stand yourselves, on a simple negation. The world is going on turning as it has been used to do, night succeeding day and generation generation; nations are waking into life, or falling into bondage: there is a deal of wonderful work of one sort or another going on in it, and you and I in our little corner have our own share of work to get

done as well as we can. Now you have put out my old light, and some light or other I must have, and you would wish me to have. What is it to be?

You will answer, probably, that I have touched the heart of the matter in putting my question. Night follows day, and generation generation. All things are founded on a "permanent order," "self-sustaining and self-evolving powers pervade all nature." Of this order and these powers we are getting to know more every day; when we know them perfectly, man, the colossal man, will have reached the highest development of which he is capable. We need not trouble ourselves about breaking them, or submitting to them, some of you would add, for we cannot either break them or submit to them. They will fulfil themselves. It is they, these great generalizations, which are alone acting in and ruling the world. We, however eccentric our actions may be, however we may pride ourselves on willing and working, are only simple links in the chain. A general *law of average* orders the unruly wills and affections of sinful men.

But here I must ask, on what is this permanent order, on what are these laws which you tell me of, founded? I acknowledge a permanent order, physical laws, as fully as you can, but I believe them to be expressions of a living and a righteous will; I believe a holy and true God to be behind them, therefore I can sit down humbly, and try to understand them, and when I understand, to obey. Are the permanent order, the laws you speak of, founded on a will? If so, on

whose will? If on the will of *a* God, of what God? Of a God who has revealed His character, His purpose, Himself, to you? If so, where, how, when?

But if you tell me that these laws, this order, are not founded on any living will, or that you do not know that they are, then I say (in the words of one of the Essayists) you are holding out to me "an iron rule which guides to nothing and ends in nothing, — which may be possible to the logical understanding, but is not possible to the spirit of man," — and you are telling me, since worship is a necessity of my being, to worship that. In the name and in the strength of a man, and a man's will, I utterly reject and defy your dead laws, for dead they must be. They may grind me to powder, but I have that in me which is above them, which will own no obedience to them. Dead laws are, so far as I can see, just what I and you and all mankind have been put into this world to fight against. Call them laws of nature if you will, I do not care. Take the commonest, the most universal: is it or is it not by the law of nature that the ground brings forth briers and all sorts of noxious and useless weeds if you let it alone? If it is by the law of nature, am I to obey the law, or to dig my garden and root out the weeds? Doubtless I shall get too old to dig, and shall die, and the law will remain, and the weeds grow over my garden and over my grave, but for all that I decline to obey the law.

I see a law of death working all around me; I feel it in my own members. Is this one of your laws, a part of the "permanent order," which is to serve me instead

of the God of my fathers? If it be, I mean to resist it to the last gasp. I utterly hate it. No noble or true work is done in this world except in direct defiance of it. What is to become of the physician's work, of every effort at sanitary reform, of every attempt at civilizing and raising the poor and the degraded, if we are to sit down and submit ourselves to this law?

Am I never to build a house, out of respect to the law of gravitation? Sooner or later the law will assert itself, and my house will tumble down. Nevertheless I will conquer the law for such space as I can. In short, I will own no dead law as my master. Dead laws I will hate always, and in all places, with all my heart, with all my soul, with all my mind, and with all my strength.

But besides rebellions against your laws of nature, and your permanent order, you must be prepared for another result of your work. You have destroyed revelation, but have you destroyed, can you destroy, the superstitious element (as you would call it, perhaps) in man? Granted that you have shown me that what I held to be my knowledge of God is all moonshine, I tell you that I shall not give up thinking about a God for all that. I tell you that I shall make gods for myself, in my own image, in the image of devils. The history of the world tells you that I shall do this, that all men will do it. By which of your laws are you going to lay all the devilish conceptions of God which will soon be let loose on the world?

I will follow this part of my subject no further. If I have misunderstood those of you to whom the above

remarks are chiefly addressed, it is not for want of trying to understand you, but of capacity for making out what you mean.

And now let me turn to the other part of the subject. I have been speaking of that which I cannot believe; let me speak to you of that which I do believe, of that which I hold to be a faith, the faith, the only faith for mankind. Do not turn from it because it seems to be egotistic. I can only speak for myself, for what I know in my own heart and conscience. While I keep to this I can speak positively, and I wish above all things to speak positively.

I was bred as a child and as a boy to look upon Christ as the true and rightful King and Head of our race, the Son of God and the Son of man. When I came to think for myself I found the want, the longing for a perfectly righteous king and head, the deepest of which I was conscious, — for a being in whom I could rest, who was in perfect sympathy with me and all men. "Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks, so longeth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God," — these, and the like sayings of the Psalmist, began to have a meaning for me.

Then, the teaching which had sunk into me unconsciously rose up and seemed to meet this longing. If that teaching were true, here was He for whom I was in search. I turned to the records of His life and death. I read, and considered, as well as I could, the character of Christ, what He said of Himself and His work; His

teaching, His acts, His sufferings. Then, when I was as young as most of you to whom I am now speaking, I found that this was indeed He. Here was the Head, the King, for whom I had longed. The more I read and thought, the more absolutely sure I became of it. This is He, I wanted no other then, I have never wanted another since. Him I can look up to and acknowledge with the most perfect loyalty. He satisfies me wholly. There is no recorded thought, word, or deed of His that I would wish to change, — that I do not recognize and rejoice in as those of my rightful and righteous King and Head. He has claimed for me, for you, for every man, all that we can ask for or dream of, for He has claimed every one of us for His soldiers and brethren, the acknowledged children of His and our Father and God.

But this loyalty I could never have rendered, no man can ever render, I believe, except to a Son of man. He must be perfect man as well as perfect God to satisfy us, — must have dwelt in a body like ours, have felt our sorrows, pains, temptations, weaknesses. He was incarnate by the Spirit of God of the Virgin. In this way I can see how he was indeed perfect God and perfect Man. I can conceive of no other in which he could have been so. The Incarnation is for me the support of all personal holiness, and the key to human history.

What was Christ's work on earth? He came to manifest, to make clear to us, the will and nature of His Father, our God. He made that will and nature clear to us as the perfectly loving and long-suffering

and righteous will and nature. He came to lead us men, His brethren, back into perfect understanding of and submission to that will, — to make us at one with it; and this He did triumphantly by His own perfect obedience to that will, by sacrificing Himself even to death for us, because it was the will of His and our Father that He should give Himself up wholly and unreservedly; thus, by His one sacrifice, redeeming us, and leaving us an example that we too should sacrifice ourselves to Him for our brethren. Thus I believe in the Atonement.

Again, Christ was not only revealed to those who saw Him here. He did not only go about doing His Father's will here on earth for thirty-three years, eighteen hundred years ago, and then leave us. Had this been so, he would certainly in one sense have been revealed, in the only sense in which some orthodox writers seem to teach that he has been revealed. He would have been revealed to certain men, at a certain time, in history, and to us in the accounts which we have of Him in the Gospels, through which accounts only we should have had to gain our knowledge of Him, judging of such accounts by our own fallible understandings. But He said, "I will be with you always, even to the end of the world," — "I will send my spirit into your hearts to testify of me"; and He has fulfilled His promise. He is revealed, not in the Bible, not in history, not in or to some men at a certain time, or to a man here and there, but in the heart of you, and of me, and of every man and woman who is now, or ever has

been, on this earth. His Spirit is in each of us, striving with us, cheering us, guiding us, strengthening us. At any moment in the lives of any one of us we may prove the fact for ourselves; we may give ourselves up to His guidance, and He will accept the trust, and guide us into the knowledge of God, and of all truth. From this knowledge, (more certain to me than any other, of which I am ten thousand times more sure than I am that Queen Victoria is reigning in England, that I am writing with this pen at this table,) if I could see no other manifestation of Christ in creation, I believe in the Trinity in Unity, the name on which all things in heaven and earth stand, which meets and satisfies the deepest needs and longings of my soul.

The knowledge of this name, of these truths, has come to me, and to all men, in one sense, specially and directly through the Scriptures. I believe that God has given us these Scriptures, this Bible, to instruct us in these the highest of all truths. Therefore I reverence this Bible as I reverence no other book; but I reverence it because it speaks of Him, and His dealings with us. The Bible has no charm or power of its own. It may become a chain round men's necks, an idol in the throne of God, to men who will worship the book, and not Him of whom the book speaks. There are many signs that this is, or is fast becoming, the case with us; but it is our fault, and not the Bible's fault. We persist in reading our own narrowness and idolatry into it, instead of hearing what it really is saying to us. I shall have to speak of Inspiration presently; but in

England, whoever will make a confession of faith must put in the front of it his belief about the Bible.

I do not know that there are any other great doctrines of our Church on which you would wish me to speak. If there are, I can only say that it is not from any wish to keep back my belief as to them that I pass them over. I hold them all, so far as I know, and simply, and in the natural sense, and am ready to give a reason for my faith to any one. Of the subjects not articles of the creed, such as miracles, inspiration, prophecy, future rewards and punishments, which are specially troubling you and the English people, I will now speak.

I believe that the writers of Holy Scripture were directly inspired by God, in a manner, and to an extent, in and to which no other men whose words have come down to us have been inspired. I cannot draw the line between their inspiration and that of other great teachers of mankind. I believe that the words of these, too, just in so far as they have proved themselves true words, were inspired by God. But though I cannot, and man cannot, draw the line, God himself has done so; for these books have been filtered out, as it were, under His guidance, from many others, which, in ages gone by, claimed a place beside them, and are now forgotten, while these have stood for thousands of years, and are not likely to be set aside now. For they speak, if men will read them, to needs and hopes set deep in our human nature, which no other books ever have spoken to, or ever can speak to, in the same way, — they set forth His government of the world as no

other books ever have set it forth, or ever can set it forth.

But though I do not believe that the difference between the inspiration of Isaiah and Shakespeare is expressible by words, the difference between the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures — the Bible as a whole — and any other possible or conceivable collection of the utterances of men seems to me clear enough. The Bible has come to us from the Jewish nation, which was chosen by God as the one best fitted to receive for all mankind, and to give forth to all mankind, the revelation of Him, — to teach them His name and character, — that is, to enable them to know Him, and, in knowing Him, to feel how they and the world need redemption, and to understand how they and the world have been redeemed. This Bible, this Book of the chosen people, taken as a whole, has done this, is in short the written revelation of God. This being so, there can be no other inspired book in the same sense in which the Bible is inspired, unless we, or some other world, are not redeemed, require another redemption and another Christ. But as we and all worlds are redeemed, and Christ is come, and God has revealed His name and His character in Christ so that we can know Him, the Bible is and must remain *the* inspired Book, the Book of the Church for all time, to which nothing can be added, from which nothing can be taken, as they will find who try to take from it or add to it. There may be another Homer, Plato, Shakespeare; there can be no other Bible.

As to the prophecies of Christ in the Bible, believing that Book to be *the* inspired Book, the written revelation of God, of course I must expect to find it full of passages referring to Him who was to show forth the nature and character of God to men. The longing for a Deliverer and Redeemer of Himself and his race was the strongest and deepest feeling in the heart of every Jewish patriot. His whole life was grounded and centred on the promise and hope of such an one. Just therefore when his utterances would be most human and most noble, most in sympathy with the cries and groanings of his own nation and the universe, they would all point to and centre in that Deliverer and Redeemer, — just in so far as they were truly noble, human, and Godlike, they would shadow forth His true character, the words He would speak, the acts He would do. Doubtless the prophet would have before his mind any notable deliverance, any noble sufferer, or deliverer of his own time; his words would refer to these. But from these he would be inevitably drawn up to the great promised Deliverer and Redeemer of his nation and his race, because he would see after all how incomplete the deliverance wrought by these must be, and his faith in the promise made to his fathers and to his nation — the covenant of God in which he felt himself to be included — would and could be satisfied with nothing less than a full and perfect deliverance, a Redeemer who should be the Head of men, the Son of man and the Son of God.

Men may have insisted, may still insist, on seeing

all sorts of fanciful references to some special acts of His in certain words of the Bible. But I must again insist that men's fancies about the Bible and Christ are not the question, but what the Bible itself says, what Christ is. The whole book is full of Him, there is no need to read Him into any part of it as to which there can be any possible doubt.

Holding this faith as to the Scriptures, I am not anxious to defend them. I rejoice that they should be minutely examined and criticised. They will defend themselves, one and all, I believe. Men may satisfy themselves — perhaps, if I have time to give to the study, they may satisfy me — that the Pentateuch was the work of twenty men; that Baruch wrote a part of Isaiah; that David did not write the Psalms, or the Evangelists the Gospels; that there are interpolations here and there in the originals; that there are numerous and serious errors in our translation. What is all this to me? What do I care who wrote them, what is the date of them, what this or that passage ought to be? They have told me what I wanted to know. Burn every copy in the world to-morrow, you don't and can't take that knowledge from me, or any man. I find them *all* good for me; so, as long as a copy is left, and I can get it, I mean to go on reading them all, and believing them all to be inspired.

Perhaps the subject of miracles has been the most trying of all to the faith of many of you. You cannot reverence a book which states, broadly and simply, that events happened which, you say, were contrary to the

order of the universe, irregular and capricious exercises of power. And yet, although such of the miracles as cannot be explained by natural causes were breaches of order and law, we Churchmen cite them as evidences that the performers of them were testifying for a God of order and law, and assuming to do them in His name. Moreover, you complain that we will not let you deal with them freely, but cry out that you are blaspheming when you attempt ever so reverently to look at miracles through your reason.

I will answer your complaint first. We Churchmen no doubt have often so argued, are arguing so at this day. Whenever we have done so, or are doing so, we are going directly in the teeth of our Lord's teaching. He expressly invited the men of his time to exercise their reason on His miracles. He said, "If I do not the works of my Father" (of the God of order) "*believe me not.* But if I do, though you believe not me, believe the works." Exercise your reason, hear what I tell of your Father's character, and then say whether these works are the works you would look for from a loving and righteous Father. I do not want to justify Churchmen in this matter; and Christ, if you will read His words, and not take our interpretation of them, needs no justification.

Now as to His miracles. Our Lord came proclaiming a kingdom of God, a kingdom ordained by God on this earth, the order and beauty of which the unruly and sinful wills of men had deformed, so that disease, and death, and all miseries and disorder, had grown up

and were destroying the order of it, and thwarting the perfectly loving will of God.

In asserting this kingdom and this order, our Lord claimed (as He must have claimed if He were indeed the Son of God) dominion over disease and death. This dominion was lower than that over the human heart and will, but He claimed it as positively. He proved His claim to be good in other ways, but specially for our present purpose by healing the sick, raising the dead. Were these works orderly or disorderly? Every one of them seems to me to be the restoring of an order which had been disturbed. They were witnesses for the law of life, faithful and true manifestations of the will of a loving Father to His children.

Yes, you may say, but He did other miracles besides these of healing. He turned water into wine, stilled the waves, multiplied loaves and fishes. These at any rate were capricious suspensions of natural laws. You say you believe in natural laws which have their ground in God's will. Such laws He suspended or set aside in these cases. Now were these suspensions orderly?

I think they were. The natural laws which Christ suspended, such as the law of increase, are laws of God. Being His laws, they are living and not dead laws, but they are not the highest law; there must be a law of God, a law of His mind, above them, or they would be dead tyrannous rules. Christ seems to me to have been asserting the freedom of that law of God

by suspending these natural laws, and to have been claiming here again, as part of His and our birthright, dominion over natural laws.

All the other miracles, I believe, stand on the same ground. None have been performed except by men who felt that they were witnessing for God, with glimpses of His order, full of zeal for the triumph of that order in the world, and working as Christ worked, in His spirit, and in the name of His Father, or of Him. If there are any miracles which do not on a fair examination fulfil these conditions — which are such as a loving Father educating sons who had strayed from or rebelled against Him would not have done — I am quite ready to give them up.

Again, as to the Mosaic cosmogony, which many of you think is enough to sink the Church of England and all other Christian bodies who pretend to hold to it, I shall not be dealing fairly with you unless I tell you what I think about it.

I own that I have never troubled myself very much upon the subject, but I give you my view as the view of a layman, who has just given so much attention to the questions raised about it as to satisfy his own mind. Take my view for what it is worth, and for nothing more; it satisfies me, and is honest at any rate. I don't particularly value it, am quite ready to change it to-morrow if you will show me a better. If all cosmogonies were to disappear to-morrow, I should be none the poorer. As nothing will make me believe that God did not create the earth, and man to rule it, no faith

of mine hangs on them; I sincerely pity those who are so much troubled about them on both sides.

I always felt the first chapter of Genesis to be a very noble and beautiful history of creation, before I ever knew of the doubts as to its authenticity, or thought of considering whether the days there mentioned were days of twenty-four hours or any measures of time at all. What impressed me most in it then was, the order and harmony of the whole, and the way in which every stage is leading up through man to God.

When I came to read it with the geological and other objections in my head, at first I quite thought that it must be an interpolation, — the mere human utterance of some reverent but dogmatic old Rabbi. I held this belief for some time, but, coming back to the account again and again, I began to feel that I had been too hasty. The key-verse of the whole first chapter — "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him, male and female created He them" — seemed to point out, that creation in this chapter cannot mean the giving of outward visible form. In this place it cannot of course; because, as God has no outward visible form, man could not in *that* sense be created in His likeness; and if not in this place, which is the key and crown of the whole, could the word have that meaning in the rest of the chapter? Again, if God created "male and female" at once, what was the meaning of the history of Eve's creation in the second chapter? Then, on looking closely at the second chapter, I found that, if I took words in

their proper sense, the accounts of creation in the first and second chapters could not refer to the same creation. I found, moreover, that the account of creation in the second chapter referred back to a former one. "The Lord God made the earth and the heavens, and every plant of the field *before* it was in the earth, and every herb of the field *before* it grew": and then the second chapter goes on to state *how* the plants grew, — "there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground," — and then how *a man* was created, and then how beasts were created, and lastly how *a woman* was created. Each account seemed complete in itself, and not to clash with, but to refer to, the other as a separate act of creation. Could they be reconciled?

Then an explanation I had read in books for which I had the greatest reverence, but which had always seemed to me far-fetched, and which I had therefore never tried to master, came before me in a new light. I mean, that the first chapter is speaking of creation in the mind of God, the second, of the clothing in visible material form of that which before had substance in His mind; in short, what we commonly mean by creation. Then I ask myself, Is this natural? — would one expect to find such a double account? It seemed to me that one would. I tried it (as the nearest analogy I could get) by the case of some invention of a man, such as the steam-engine. Here I found that the highest invention must be first in the mind of the inventor; that after that highest invention has dawned on him,

he proceeds to clothe his invention in material form. This explanation has always satisfied me since, though I quite admit that it is nothing but a speculation. Very possibly it may not meet many of the difficulties. There may be quite as many geological objections to the account of creation in the second, as to that in the first chapter. As I said at the outset, I only give it you for what it is worth.

But you have another charge against Christianity. You say it is after all a selfish faith, in which, however beautiful and noble the moral teaching may be, the ultimate appeal has always been to the hope of reward and fear of punishment. You will tell me that in ninety-nine of our churches out of a hundred I shall hear this doctrine, and shall find it in ninety-nine out of every hundred of theological or religious works.

If it be so I am sorry for it. But I am speaking of Christ's Gospel, and I say that you will not find the doctrine you protest against there. I cannot go through our Lord's teaching and His disciples' to prove this. I ask you to read for yourselves, bringing honest and clear heads to the study, and not heads full of what you have thought, or this and the other man has preached or written, and I say that then you will give up this charge.

But, as I have tried to do in all other cases, so here, I will tell you exactly what my own faith on this matter is.

Christ has told me that the only reward I shall ever get will be "life eternal," and that life eternal is to

know God and Him. That is all the reward I care about. The only punishment I can ever bring on myself will be, to banish myself from His presence and the presence of all who know Him, to dwell apart from Him and my brethren, shut up in myself. That is the only punishment I dread.

But this reward He has given us already, here. He has given us to know God, and knowing God involves entering into His kingdom, and dwelling in it. That kingdom Christ has opened to you, and to me, here. We, you and I, may enter in any hour we please. If we don't enter in now, and here, I can't see how we are ever likely to enter in in another world. Why should not we enter in? It is worth trying. There are no conditions. It is given for the asking.

I think you will find it all you are in search of and are longing for. Above all, you will find in it and nowhere else rest, peace, — "not a peace which depends upon pacts and bargains among men, but which belongs to the very nature and character and being of God. Not a peace which is produced by the stifling and suppression of activities and energies, but the peace in which all activities and energies are perfected and harmonized. Not a peace which comes from the toleration of what is base or false, but which demands its destruction. Not a peace which begins from without, but a peace which is first wrought in the inner man, and thence comes forth to subdue the world. Not a peace which a man gets for himself by standing aloof from the sorrows and confusions of the world in which he is

born, of the men whose nature he shares, choosing a calm retreat and quiet scenery and a regulated atmosphere; but a peace which has never thriven except in those who have suffered with their suffering kind, who have been ready to give up selfish enjoyments, sensual or spiritual, for their sakes, who have abjured all devices of escape from ordained toils and temptations; the peace which was His who bore the sorrows and sins and infirmities of man, who gave up Himself that He might become actually one with them, who thus won for them a participation in the Divine nature, an inheritance in that peace of God which passeth all understanding."

This kingdom of God is good enough for me at any rate. I can trust Him who has brought me into it to add what He will, to open my eyes, and strengthen my powers, that I may see and enjoy ever more and more of it, in this world, or in any other in which He may put me hereafter. Where that may be is no care of mine; it will be in His kingdom still, that I know; no power in Heaven, or Hell, or Earth can cast me out of that, except I myself. While I remain in it I can freely use and enjoy every blessing and good gift of His glorious earth, the inheritance which He has given to us, His father's children, His brethren. When it shall be His good pleasure to take me out of it, He will not take me out of but bring me into more perfect communion with Him and with my brethren. He nourisheth my heart with good things on this earth, He will not cease to do this anywhere else. He reveals Himself to me here, though as a man I cannot take in his full

and perfect revelation, but when I awake up after His likeness I shall be satisfied, — and not till then.

There is another stumbling-block in the way of many of you, quite apart from such doubts as I have been speaking of hitherto, on which I must say a few words. You are revolted and kept at arm's-length by the separatist and exclusive habits and maxims of those who profess to have the faith which you want. Many of them are kind, exemplary men, but just because they are Christians, and in so far forth as they are Christians, they are calling to you to come out from amongst the people of the world, — to separate yourselves from an adulterous generation.

Against this call something which you know to be true and noble in you rises up. You have felt that what your age is crying out for is, union. You acknowledge the power of that cry in your own hearts. You want to feel with all men, and for all men. If you need a faith at all, it is one which shall meet that cry, which shall teach you how all men are bound together; not how some may be separated from the rest. You will not be false to your age. You will have no faith at all, or a faith for all mankind.

Keep to that; take nothing less than that; only look again and see whether that is not just what Christ offers you. Again I urge you not to look at His followers, real or professing, — look at Him, look at His life.

Was He exclusive? Did ever man or woman come near Him and He turn away? Did He not go amongst all ranks, into every society? Did He not go to the

houses of great men and rulers; of Pharisees, of poor men, of publicans? Did He not frequent the temple, the market-place, the synagogue, the sea-shore, the hill-side, the haunts of outcasts and harlots? Was He not to be found at feasts and at funerals? Wherever men and women were to be found, there was His place and His work; and there is ours. He who believes in Him must go into every society where he has any call whatever. Who are we that we should pick and choose? The greatest ruffian, the most abandoned woman, that ever walked the face of this earth, were good enough for our Lord to die for. If He sends us amongst them, He will take care of us, and has something for us to do or speak, for or to them. The greatest king, the holiest saint on earth, is not too high company for one for whom Christ died, as He did for you and me. So, if He sends us amongst great or holy people, let us go, and learn what He means us to learn there.

I know how deeply many of you feel and mourn over the miseries and disorder of England and the world, — how you long to do something towards lightening ever so small a part of those miseries, rescuing ever so small a corner of the earth from that disorder. I know well how earnestly many of you are working in one way or another for your country and your brethren. I know what high hopes many of you have for the future of the world and the destiny of man. I say, mourn on, work on; abate not one jot of any hope you have ever had for the world or for man. Your hopes, be they what they may, have never been high enough, — your work

never earnest enough. But I ask you whether your hopes and your work have not been marred again and again, whether you have not been thrown back again and again into listlessness and hopelessness, by failures of one kind or another, whether you have not felt that those failures have been caused more or less by your own uncertainty, by your having had to work and fight without a leader, with comrades to whom you were bound only by chance, to journey without any clear knowledge of the road you were going, or where it led to?

At such times have you not longed for light and guidance? what would you not have given for a well of light and hope and strength, springing up within you and renewing your powers and energies? What would you not have given for the inward certainty that the road you were travelling was the right one, however you might stumble on it; that the line of battle in which you stood was the line for all true men, and was marching to assured victory, however it might waver and break at the point which had been given you to hold, whatever might become of you? Well, be sure that light and guidance, that renewal of strength and hope, that certainty as to your side and your road, you are meant to have; they have been prepared, and are ready, for every man of you, whenever he will take them. The longings for them are whispered in your hearts by the Leader, whose cross, never turned back, ever triumphing more and more over all principalities and powers of evil, blazes far ahead in the van of our

battle. He has been called the Captain of our Salvation, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Lamb who was slain for the world; He has told us His own name, the Son of God and the Son of man; He has claimed to be the redeemer, deliverer, leader of mankind.

My younger brothers, I am not speaking to you the words of enthusiasm or excitement, but the words of sober every-day knowledge and certainty. I tell you that all the miseries of England and of other lands consist simply in this and in nothing else, that we men, made in the image of God, made to know Him, to be one with Him in His Son, will not confess that Son, our Lord and Brother, to be the Son of God and Son of man, the living Head of our race and of each one of us. I tell you that if we would confess Him, and lay hold of Him, and let Him enter into and rule and guide us and the world, instead of trying to rule and guide ourselves and the world without Him, we should see and know that the kingdom of God is just as much about us now as it will ever be. I tell you that we should see all sorrow and misery melting away and drawn up from this fair world of God's like mountain mist before the July sun.

Three more words and I have done. I am not asking you to adopt any faith of mine. But as you would do good work in your generation, I ask of you to give yourselves no peace till you have answered these questions, each one for himself, in the very secret recesses of his heart, "Do I, does my race, want a head? Can we be satisfied with any one less than a Son of man and a

Son of God? Is this Christ, who has been so long worshipped in England, He?"

If you can answer, though with faltering lips, "Yes, this is He," I care very little what else you accept, all else that is necessary or good for you will come in due time, if once He has the guidance of you. I have not been confessing my faith to convert you to any opinions whatever. I would most gladly have said anything I had to say in some other form had it been possible, for this is a very disagreeable form to me, and one which is almost certain to be misunderstood. But, looking most anxiously at late doings and writings, feeling most deeply the awful importance of the crisis to our Church and our country, and longing to say some deliberate word to the many of you whom I do know, and who I believe will read this for my sake, I have come to feel that it is the only thing to do. You have a right to say to every one, whatever his rank or position in the Church, who comes forward now to speak to you, "No anonymous stabbings from behind. Stand out in your own names. And now, tell us, — not what we are *not* to believe, we can discover plenty of that for ourselves without your help, — but what we are to believe. And, before all other things, just tell us this, Have *you* any faith? What is it? Has it answered?

I have replied to the two first questions as openly and clearly as a paper of this kind and my own power of saying what I mean will allow. To the third I say now, Yes, it has answered. My faith has been no

holiday or Sunday faith, but one for every-day use; a faith to live and die in, not to argue or talk about. It has had to stand the wear and tear of life; it was not got in prosperity. It has had to carry me through years of anxious toil and small means, through the long sicknesses of those dearer to me than my own life, through deaths amongst them both sudden and lingering. Few men of my age have had more failures of all kinds; no man has deserved them more, by the commission of all kinds of blunders and errors, by evil tempers, and want of faith, hope, and love.

Through all this it has carried me, and has risen up in me after every failure and every sorrow, fresher, clearer, stronger. Why do I say "*it*"? I mean He. He has carried me through it all; He who is your Head and the Head of every man, woman, child, on this earth, or who has ever been on it, just as much as He is my Head. And He will carry us all through every temptation, trial, sorrow, we can ever have to encounter, in this world or any other, if we will only turn to Him, lay hold of Him, and cast them all upon Him, as He has bidden us.

My younger brothers, you on whom the future of England, under God, at this moment depends, will you not try Him? Is He not worth a trial?

II.

THE MOTE AND THE BEAM.

A CLERGYMAN'S LESSONS FROM THE PRESENT PANIC.

By the Rev. F. D. MAURICE,

INCUMBENT OF ST. PETER'S, ST. MARYLEBONE.

II.

THE MOTE AND THE BEAM.

A CLERGYMAN'S LESSONS FROM THE PRESENT PANIC.

PART I.

BELIEF AND UNBELIEF IN OXFORD AND LONDON.

About the beginning of Lent the clergy of England were invited to pronounce certain of their brethren enemies of the Christian faith. Such a call, coming at such a time, must have led us to reflect upon other sins besides those of the writers of "Essays and Reviews." Attacks have been made upon those writers from all quarters. Apologies have been made for them. Now that the excitement has a little abated, may I be permitted to set down for the benefit of my younger brethren a few of the lessons which have been brought home to me by these discussions, respecting the duties which belong to *all* the priests of the land, respecting the unbelief with which we are *all* chargeable?

As I am a London clergyman, I would rather speak first of these duties and these offences as they affect our work here. But the subject is connected more closely in the popular mind with the Universities, especially with Oxford. What is said of a body from which we

have received our choicest blessings, cannot be indifferent to us. If Oxford is on its trial, every Oxford man is on his trial.

I. The panic which this book has produced is mainly owing to an article which appeared in the *Westminster Review* of last October. It may have been noticed before in episcopal charges or University sermons; but these possess a merely local or professional interest. The review aroused both the laity and the clergy. It came from an Oxford man. It declared that the faith of both pupils and tutors in Oxford was utterly shaken. Some of the latter, finding the old Christianity untenable, were trying to construct a new Christianity. It was a very poor experiment. The writer, uttering, as he thinks, the sentiments of the most thoughtful men of his age, maintains that, if there is to be a Christianity at all, the old type is better than the modern one.

The tone of the Reviewer, when he speaks of his seniors, is defiant and contemptuous; when he speaks of himself and his contemporaries, it is serious, even pathetic. On the first subject his wish is father to his thoughts; we cannot, therefore, attach much worth to them. On the second, he evidently tells us what he has known and felt. And there are other reluctant testimonies on the same side. Mr. Hughes has confessed, in the first tract of this series, that his experience of the young men of the day whose minds have been formed at Oxford coincides in essentials with that of the Reviewer. We clergymen are not qualified to contradict such authorities. Young men count it a

rudeness to tell us what they think. They suspect that we only half accept the confessions which we make with our lips; why should they force us to endanger our position? If we have no doubts, why should they disturb us? So we only see the surface of their minds; the depth of their unbelief — perhaps, also, the depth of their belief — is hidden from our eyes. We ought therefore to be thankful for the discoveries which the Reviewer has made to us, if they are ever so painful.

We owe also much to this writer for telling us broadly and simply what kind of opinion it is which sets him at war with Christianity, new or old, and which sets those at war with it who represent, as he supposes, the coming time. He believes that there are fixed natural laws, which determine the course of the world, and to which the actions of men must be conformed. He believes that the proclamation of these laws is the great power for influencing society. To set them forth in contrast to that faith in a Will, which lies at the basis of all theology, and of all the morality which is grounded upon theology, is the business of our time. He treats the Essayists as men who cannot influence society, who do not recognize with any clearness these natural laws, who are hampered with theological notions, who are in fact mere Mrs. Partingtons attempting with their brooms to sweep out an Atlantic which must overwhelm them and those who denounce them together.

Evidently the Reviewer knows nothing of criticism; he is not the least infected with any German neology; debates about the authenticity of the books of Scrip-

ture only interest him, so far as they indicate that we cannot determine what he takes to be the grounds of our faith. For that reason simply our controversies are important in his eyes. They convince him that the ground is crumbling under our feet. We have nothing to proclaim to the world; we have not settled even our premises.

I cannot consider that any attention which has been given to this article has been undeserved. But some inferences have been drawn from it which are quite unwarranted. We have assumed the writer to say that the Essayists and Reviewers have *produced* the state of mind which he affirms to exist in Oxford. He allows them no such honor. He accepts them merely as indications that the ablest men amongst us are incapable of encountering that state of mind. He thinks that they are trying, so far as they can, to encounter it. He is sure that they have not succeeded, and cannot succeed. That is the one cause of the pleasure which he derives from them.

Even if this were not the plain meaning of the Reviewer's words, it would have been impossible for those who know what has been passing in Oxford during the last thirty years to believe, on his authority, or on any authority, that the Essayists and Reviewers had thrown elements of doubt into an atmosphere which was previously undisturbed and calm. Think of all the discussions which have been carried on there respecting the authority of Scripture and of tradition; respecting the fixedness of creeds and their develop-

ments; respecting the obligation to subscribe articles, and the license to evade them! Think how often the persons whose names were most honored there, who spoke on their own side with the greatest decision, have changed their position, have reversed their decrees, have treated with contempt that which they almost idolized! Think how those to whom our Communion was dearest have shaken the dust off their feet and left us! Think how all these events have been talked over in the rooms of every undergraduate! Think what effects they must have produced in the hearts of those who have talked of them least, who have brooded over them in silence! Think what jests they have heard in the houses of their fathers, about these remarkable proofs of the unanimity of clergymen and of the sincerity of their convictions! Think what bitter scorn they have listened to from High-Church clergymen concerning the inconsistent faith of the opposite school! Think with what notes of triumph that scorn has been answered when the High-Churchmen have fulfilled the prophecies which had been made respecting them, and have been guilty of schism! Then, think how, side by side with these theological debates, there has arisen in Oxford a new and sudden interest in physical science. Think what youths, not deep in either subject, have heard of the certainty of the conclusions in one of them, — of its undeviating, unrelaxing progress! Think how seniors, not naturally inclined to these studies, have encouraged them for the very purpose of discouraging others which they considered more perilous. Think

of all these things, and then say whether there is not enough to explain the phenomena which have startled us in the new Oxford life. Is there not reason here why so many of the most serious shrink from taking orders; why so many begin to fear that there is nothing solid at their feet, nothing that may not crumble to pieces if the light is let in upon it; why some profess boldly the doctrine that the science of Nature is that which must absorb all others into itself; why many hold that man and God must alike be contemplated as parts of Nature, and subjects of laws which have established themselves. The Essayists and Reviewers are not answerable for creating this state of feeling. All of us have been instruments in creating it, so far as we have substituted arguments against opponents for belief in a living God and charity to living men.

It seems to me that those tutors and professors who see these influences around them, who feel these influences acting upon themselves, must pass through struggles which we who are not in their circumstances cannot appreciate. If they are devoted to their work, free from the coldness which keeps young men at a distance, able to attract and ready to accept their confidence, they must discover in them a number of difficulties which they had known of in books, but which had not been revealed to them as actual parts of human experience. They may perceive that those who suffer from these perplexities are far more alive to the deepest and divinest interests, far less frivolous, than numbers of those who are quietly preparing themselves, often by

a course of idleness and dissipation, to take their vows as clergymen. They may be afraid to suppress doubts which God has perhaps awakened, afraid to foster the many motives which young men have to substitute acquiescence for faith. If to these fears one adds the influence of a cloister atmosphere in disconnecting the thoughts of the brain with the business of life and with the works of the citizen, — and at the same time the strong conviction in the mind of a teacher that they ought to be connected, and that he must not allow any opinions which he has either formed or inherited to sever the connection, — I can, I think, find an interpretation of those Essays which are really Oxford Essays, without assuming them to be attempts at a Neo-Christianity. I can see that they contain lessons for us which we can ill afford to lose, even when we feel most keenly how little they supply the wants which they indicate.

The Essay which the Westminster Reviewer has denounced most bitterly is that of Dr. Temple. He regards it as a miserable effort to sustain an obsolete theology by an advanced philosophy. Dr. Temple speaks of a colossal man. That phrase is worthy of Comte, was probably learnt from him. But Dr. Temple speaks of an education of man by a living God. There we discover the slave of an old Hebrew tradition. I know no deeper instruction than is supplied both by the Essay and the comment upon the Essay. Englishmen and Englishwomen in all ages have been drawn to the Bible, because it sets forth God to them not as a

Being about whom they are to hold certain opinions, or towards whom they are to exhibit certain feelings, but as One who is manifesting Himself towards them, governing them, meeting them in their necessities, ignorances, weaknesses, awakening their consciences, showing them their evils, teaching them their relations with their brethren, using their sins and follies, their joys and sorrows, as ministers in their education. Such a belief connects itself with all the morality of those who cherish it; they can in no wise disjoin their morality from their theology. God is revealing to them what His character is, that they may learn what they have become by estrangement from it, that they may be reformed after His image. He has redeemed them from the habits and dispositions to which they are naturally prone. He gives them power to be righteous and true men. This, I say, has been and is the faith of our land. It can have no other. It has been cast in the mould of the Bible. If you give us anything in the place of this, we shall become atheists.

Now, the title of Dr. Temple's Essay held out a promise that this venerable faith of Englishmen was that which he wished to substitute for the endless debates about propositions with which Oxford had been occupied. It savored not of a new Christianity, but of a return to the oldest. And, so far as Dr. Temple followed the instincts of his own heart, so far as he has profited by his Rugby experience, this promise is not belied. One sees how much he must have gained in spiritual insight by intercourse with boys; how much

he has learnt the need of a Divine Teacher through his faithfulness as a human teacher. What, then, makes this Essay disappointing, almost heart-breaking, to those who had hoped so much from it? Not, I think, the colossal man. That phrase may be Comte's, or any one's else who likes to claim it. Something it has done to petrify those thoughts, affections, sins, which Dr. Temple discerns in the history of the race and in the history of each individual. But the substantive would have been stronger than the adjective, the man would have quickened the Colossus, if there had not been another phrase in the Essay which covers a far stonier conception. Dr. Temple represents the Jewish people as existing to teach Monotheism to the world. The calling of a man, a family, a nation, — the growth, the sins, the punishment of the man, the family, the nation, — all that Divine human record, — is only to tell mankind *not* to worship a great many Gods. O miserable result of law, history, prophecy! Miserable substitute for the revelation of *the* living God, from whose service all idolatries are deflections, in whose worship all the partial worships of the nations must be united! How entirely has Dr. Temple defeated his own admirable conviction, that Greeks and Romans, as well as Jews, were under the guidance and education of God, by this hard notion! How well might he have justified that conviction if he had followed the living lessons of Scripture, instead of giving us this scholastical figment in exchange for them!

But where did Dr. Temple get this notion? It is a

dull, dreary, respectable commonplace which he carried with him from Oxford to Rugby. It might have been introduced into a hundred sermons at St. Mary's without provoking a single comment from heads of houses or from bishops. It would have been accepted as an exceedingly proper doctrine, which had been sanctioned by the most orthodox authorities. And yet *this* has made the Bible, which is evidently full of joy and strength to the writer's own heart, look like a dead letter in his Essay. The Book bears to him the good news that there is a Teacher who never ceases to guide and govern those whom He has created in His image; never ceases to prepare them for the day when He shall gather up all things in Christ, both things in heaven and things in earth. Had nothing hindered him from taking in the full import of that message, his own Essay would have been filled with a new life; nay, the whole volume would have acquired a different character. We should have remembered the introduction, and have believed that the Divine Teacher would turn even words that grieved us, or that we could not interpret, to our good. Is it not well, then, that we should consider *what* it is that has robbed us of this blessing? Should we not confess honestly that it is an opinion which has been lurking in all our hearts? We cannot condemn Dr. Temple for it. If he has brought it to light that we may cast it out, we owe him great thanks.

The lesson which I have learnt from Dr. Temple's Essay is enforced by all those which have proceeded directly from Oxford. All express painfully and deeply

a want which is affecting our English divinity, which causes laymen to groan that it does them no good. All indicate a struggle, though an ineffectual struggle, to recover what we have lost.

Mr. Pattison's Essay would have passed, I believe, unscathed through the ordeal of even unfriendly criticism, if he had not expressed the results of it in some sentences, which sound at first very sceptical and very hopeless. The authority of the Church has been tried; that has failed. The authority of the Bible has been substituted for it; that has failed. The authority of Reason has been tried; that has failed, or is failing. The evidence in the Essay being drawn especially from the records of the last century, when the authority of the Church was not much recognized, — when evidences of natural and revealed religion were exchanged for the words of the Bible, — makes much more in favor of the third conclusion than of the two others. If it is a conclusion in which nothing is concluded, the Rationalist has rather more cause to complain of it than any one else. But may it not be a conclusion which suggests, though it does not state, the cause of our different forms of unbelief, and the cure for them all? Has not the High-Churchman forgotton God in exalting the Church? Has not the Biblicist forgotten God in exalting the Bible? Has not the Rationalist forgotten God in exalting the Reason? If we turn to God and confess that sin, will not the Church, the Bible, the Reason, each take its own place, each work with, not against, the other? Will not each be exalted as it has never been exalted yet?

That great truth is even more thrust upon us by the study of Mr. Jowett's Essay than of Mr. Pattison's. This Essay has been called the best and the worst in the series. I can understand the sentiment. I can in part adopt it. No Essay leaves on my mind such a sense of an inward belief, of an honesty, a devotion, which words cannot express, which must come forth in the life of a man. No Essay causes me more perplexity, — leads me to ask myself oftener, "Does the Scripture then mean anything, everything, or nothing?" And yet, when I do ask myself that question in any moment of faith and prayer, this answer comes out very distinctly: "All this proves what we most want to feel: that the Bible needs a Divine interpreter to bind together those different interpretations which Mr. Jowett has set before us in such startling contradiction. He does not say that the Bible is not the word of God. He makes us think what we must mean when we say that it is the word of God. Any other conception of it must be ineffectual if these objections exist. It is idle to say that they are discussed and refuted in a hundred books. The hundred books have not driven them out of the minds of men. Mr. Jowett feels deeply that the one book may do much more for us than the hundred. What he should have told us is, that it *must* do more than the hundred — that it *must* be better than all its interpreters — because it witnesses directly of God; because it sends the wisest and the weakest to Him." Surely, if we are brought to this point by Mr. Jowett's teaching, we shall not think that our best and safest course is to silence the tutor

who, probably more than any other in the University, has taught young men that they may find a friend in a clergyman, and a friend in that clergyman's Master.

Of Mr. Wilson's Essay I shall have to speak in another part of this paper; if I do not refer to him here, it is because he has not for many years been a tutor in Oxford. When he was a tutor there, we have the authority of the *Quarterly Review* for saying, that he was particularly active in enforcing a rigid adherence to the Articles in their natural sense. The measures which he took for that purpose do not appear to have been eminently successful, or to be specially worthy of our imitation. If, since he has been a country clergyman, he entertains those who frequent his ministrations with discussions upon multitudinism, individualism, and ideology, I should think he had discovered an effectual and ingenious method of illustrating the worth and simplicity of prayers written centuries ago, as compared with the most refined and advanced preaching of our own century.

The only Essay written by an Oxford man which has any relation to the belief or unbelief that is expressed in the Westminster Article, is Mr. Baden Powell's. He, like the Reviewer, had little interest in Biblical criticism for its own sake, — had no sympathy with any German speculation. He was an English man of science. The miracles, regarded as departures from order, contradicted, in his judgment, the very idea of physical science; he could not reconcile them. He believed that no one could. Nevertheless, he recognized a region of faith

beyond the region of science. What it was he could not explain. I imagine that he considered it, by its very nature, inexplicable. Extremes meet. He may have arrived by a strange route at the very result at which so many devout Romanists arrive; faith and reason may have been as real opposites in his mind as in theirs. I cannot read his Essay without being persuaded that his faith was a reality to him. It is not the mere desire to think so of one who has been taken from us which gives me the assurance; it is the obvious conclusion, that one who shocked ordinary opinions as much as he did would not have scrupled to shock them more if a deep inward conviction had not held him back. The world would give him little credit for the reserved belief; it was everything to himself. I must honor any one who was able to retain it under these difficult conditions. But I could not hold it myself under such conditions. I could not urge any one else to hold it. The lesson I would gather from Mr. Powell's Essay is, that the reserved *something* which was so necessary to him is indeed the very ground of all science, as well as of all faith. What was that something but the Will of a Father in heaven; that which we say has been manifested in Christ; that which we affirm to be the ground of all order in nature; that which we affirm to be the ground of all righteousness, of all moral life in man. Take away that Will, and you do indeed get rid of Christ's acts of healing, — of the powers which He is said to have exerted over nature and man. But you get rid also (as Mr. Hughes has urged in his tract)

of all the energies by which men fight against disease and degeneracy. Admit the Will, and Christ's acts become the most blessed and enduring manifestations of it; denunciations of all fatalism; justifications of all attempts to remove the disorders of the universe; pledges that order shall be triumphant over them at last.

The conclusion to which I have been led by this Essay, and by all the Essays, is this. Theology and science present themselves to men in Oxford as two antagonistic principles or powers, which some ingenious person may possibly be able to reconcile. At present the scheme of reconciliation is either to give up certain opinions about theology which are incompatible with science, or certain opinions about science which are incompatible with theology. But, in fact, it is the worship of opinions which is enslaving both theology and science, and nowhere enslaving them more than at the university. Can we affirm that anything is? If not, what becomes of science? What is to come of our abstractions and generalizations? Can we say that GOD is? If not, what is theology? The new physical science at Oxford will become merely a metaphysical talk about physics, — the orthodoxy and heterodoxy of Oxford will become merely a metaphysical talk about God, — if we shrink from this question. All studies will suffer the same fate. The study of history will be a talk about progressive or conservative notions. The study of language will be a talk about races. The Professors at Oxford, I am sure, dread this calamity; with the indifference to real study, the tendency to endless criticism, debating, scorn,

which must be the result of it. None, I am satisfied, are laboring more truly in their own spheres to counteract it, than the most eminent of the Essayists. But they are not quite sure whether the counteraction is to come from more liberal notions, or from a deeper and more earnest faith. They vibrate between the two conclusions; when they see how afraid those who profess orthodoxy are of investigation, they incline to the former. O, let them be sure that that terror is itself the consequence of faithlessness; that it is faith we need, one and all. The orthodox need it, and show that they need it by the shrieks with which they fill the air when any doubt is stirred. The liberal need it, and show that they need it by their incapacity to encounter any of the real problems of the world except by vague generalities. The old need it, that all the traditions and services which they have loved may not become mere empty idols. The young need it, that all the subjects which they discuss may not become mere shadows to them. Be sure our young men cannot dwell any longer in a twilight of opinion; they cannot be content with notions, liberal or illiberal. In the deepest doubts of the nineteenth century, as of the sixteenth, there is a demand for a faith deeper than that of the monarchs and priests who are most anxious to crush the expressions of unbelief. Now, as then, there is a cry for a God in whom peasants as well as scholars may trust, who cares to deliver both from the yoke of visible tyrants and of their own fancies and vanities. Let only a few men at Oxford declare that they believe in such a God,

that they are sure His Kingdom is indeed established and will have no end; the voice, like that of the monk in a much smaller, younger university of Germany, will reach thousands of hearts. It will do what no Erasmus has been able to do for the promotion of letters and the exposure of corruptions. It will do what no Reuchlin has been able to do for the vindication of philology against obscurantists. It will do what no Leo has been able to do for art, because it will tell the Leos of the earth that art does not stand on their patronage, but on the truth of God. It will do what no mere debates about science have been able to do for the quickening of all real scientific investigation, because it will show that there is an end which may reward those investigations, that there is a Living Teacher who quickens them and watches over them.

I doubt not every great movement in Oxford has been an effort for this reform. But it has been a reform *manqué*, because so much of opinion-worship has been mixed with the worship of God. The clear distinction must be made; the full reformation must come. But who will stand in that day? Which of us will bear the light of it.

II. This lesson, if true, belongs even more to London than to Oxford, to the preachers of the metropolis than to the tutors of the university. London clergymen drew up the address to the Archbishop against the Essays and Reviews; they appealed confidently to their London brethren to support them. They had reason for that confidence. Such a book must be far more irritating

and exasperating to us than to men who dwell in cloisters. We have not much leisure for speculation. Many who had once a taste for it have lost the taste. Everything reminds us of work and suffering. Whatever does not enable us to work and suffer has none of the marks which we seek of truth and divinity. Here, we said, are men who throw us back into a sea of speculation. "They seem to tell us that all which we learnt in our colleges about the pillars of our faith is unstable. We were instructed that the evidences for it from prophecy, from miracle, from the authenticity of the Scripture books, were good against all objectors. Now, we hear that all these are feeble; that the objectors, old or new, may be right. We do not know where we are standing. And it is not only we who hear these tidings. The members of our congregations hear them. Men say to us, women say to us, that the things we have been taking for granted are disputed by persons of ten times our learning, persons of our own cloth and profession. What are we to do? Surely such writers ought to be silenced if they can be silenced. If they cannot be silenced, surely we ought to declare that we utterly repudiate them. If that is not enough, we should try to confute them by arguments. If we have a Creed and a Bible, let us show that we have them, and will not part with them."

I can go all lengths with the final resolution which I have ascribed to these London ministers, and which I am satisfied expresses the true desire of the best part of them. "If we have a Creed and a Bible, let us show that we have them." I am willing to consider

hereafter whether we shall show that by trying to silence the Essayists, or to protest against them, or to confute them. I will first allude to another method which seems to me, at all events, more obvious and direct, and which need not be interfered with by the other methods, if they should be desirable.

If I wish to show that I have a creed, I would proclaim that creed. I say that I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth. Then I would proclaim GOD the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth. I say that I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, who was born of the Virgin Mary, who suffered under Pontius Pilate, who was crucified, died, and buried, who descended into Hell, who rose again the third day from the dead, who ascended into Heaven, who sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, who shall come again to judge the quick and the dead. Then I would preach of Jesus Christ as the only Son of God, our Lord. I would preach of all those acts by which he has shown, and of all those by which He will show, that He is the only Son of God, our Lord. I say that I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, the life everlasting. Then I would proclaim the Holy Ghost, and what He has done to build up a Catholic Church, to establish a communion of saints, to impart forgiveness of sins; how He has quickened, and is quickening, and will quicken men's

mortal bodies; how He is bestowing and will bestow on men the life everlasting.

If these words are true, surely they are the most wonderful truths that we are able to utter. Surely they contain the grandest revelation of God, the most wonderful message of deliverance to all men. Would it not be better then to preach these, than to bring forward subtle arguments to show why we have a right to preach them, upon what authority we hold them, why they are not to be disturbed? If they are true, may we not present them boldly to those for whom they are meant? If they are true, is not God true; is not He living; and will they not go forth with the demonstration of His Spirit and power?

We are in the midst of work, you say; we have not time to speculate. Just so. Then why waste the short time in which you are able to work in speculation? Why argue and debate, when you might proclaim good news to your fellow-creatures? You talk of the value of testimony and antiquity in establishing certain propositions. Cannot you trust God to testify of them as He did of old? You say the evidence of miracle and prophecy is conclusive. Let it be conclusive. Then speak out the conclusion. Set forth the miracles as they are set forth in the Gospel, as witnesses of Christ's kingdom over men. Study the prophets, and learn what words they spoke to the people in their day respecting the living God and His government over men. See whether their words are not mightier than all the evidences that have been deduced from them.

For you say that you are determined to show you have a Bible. In God's name, do it, then! You are not showing that when you are disputing about it; trying to prove its statements by your feeble reasoning; trying to silence and confound all who raise objections to it. You are showing that you have it if you really recognize in it treasures new and old; if you are sure that these treasures are committed to you that you may dispense them to your people; if you are sure that a living Spirit can alone make them intelligible and mighty to you as to them. Is it not a melancholy and a miserable thing to hear men, in the face of all that we see or know to exist in London, prelecting about the evidences of Christianity, as if *they* ever helped to raise a soul out of perdition, — as if Christ Himself were not higher and more effectual than all evidences about Him? If the Essayists and Reviewers set clergymen of all measures of intellect — yes, if they set clergymen of the very highest intellect, with the greatest knowledge of objections, ancient and modern, with great logical power and clearness of exposition — upon the old task of producing evidences for or from miracles, prophecy, the authority of Scripture, — their book will be indeed a curse to us. The congregations of the metropolis will have a right to tell the authors of it, — "You have led our preachers to give us stones when we are wanting bread." But congregations may obtain a blessing from it for which they will always have to praise God. The younger clergy may be driven from those dreary arguments which have proved so ineffectual in the mouths of their fathers.

They may believe that God Himself is speaking to them, and warning them to be less conceited about the power of their arguments, — to be more confident in the power of His truth. If they have been resting their faith in the Gospel upon Paley's arguments, or upon their recollection of his arguments, it is well that they should be led to suspect such a foundation; it is well that they should learn their faith again at the feet of Christ Himself: for so only can they impart it to others, so only can it in any degree meet the miseries of the world around them. Churches did not arise, Christendom was not formed, by the preaching of evidences, but by the preaching of a Gospel. Churches cannot be restored, Christendom cannot be reunited, by the preaching of evidences, but by the preaching of a Gospel.

But do we believe that we have such a Gospel? Do we accept the Creeds? These are great questions indeed; to be meditated in our hearts before we condemn any of our brethren for unbelief. It seems to me that we need, one and all of us, to have our unbelief probed and laid bare; that we need to confess it before God, and to ask Him to take it away from us. We have been afraid to do this. We have wanted to think that all was right with us. There has been a certain consolation in discovering those whom we might pronounce wrong. O, what have we not suffered for this cowardice and baseness! There *is* a faith beneath our unbelief; there *is* a God who is sustaining that faith! If we would penetrate below the crumbling surface, we should find it, we should find Him. And perhaps we

should find a faith in those who seemed furthest from it, we should find a God upholding it in them. If we believe in a Divine Will to all good as strongly as the Westminster Reviewer believes or thinks he believes in the generalizations of the human intellect, we may try which is stronger for the reformation of society.

PART II.

OLD CREEDS AND MODERN OPINIONS.

THE lessons from the present crisis which I considered in the first part were suggested in great measure by an article in the *Westminster Review*. I cannot find a better text for those of which I am about to speak, than an elaborate article in the *National Review* for January, which was also called forth by the "Essays and Reviews." It presents the subject in quite another aspect. Like the *Westminster*, it regards the publication of the Essays as a sign of the times, as marking in some sense a theological epoch. But the writer is by no means revolutionary. He desires quiet progress and toleration. He is a dissenter, with unusually benignant feelings towards the Church of England, and with a sincere desire to save it, if possible, from destruction.

These feelings exhibit themselves at the outset of his paper. He contrasts the bigotry of the Independents, in ejecting Dr. Davidson from a professorship on the ground of his Scriptural investigations, with the freedom of thought which is displayed by seven men who belong

to our universities, who are acknowledged ornaments of them, and who had not (when he wrote) called forth any severe animadversions from the societies of which they were members, or from the Church generally. He accounts for the difference by the necessity under which such a body as the Independents feels itself to maintain its sectarian position, and by the close connection of the English Church with the social and literary life of the nation. He speaks of the Dissenters as adhering to the doctrinal Protestantism of the sixteenth century, and as being, therefore, obliged to resist all invasion of a rigid Scripturalism; of the Anglican Church as combining, however inconsistently and illogically, Catholic with Protestant elements, — reverence for tradition with reverence for the Bible, — and, in consequence of that awkward union, as being less jealous of the honor of the written Word. He hails the Essayists as breaking loose from the fetters of Protestantism, — if by Protestantism we mean the belief that the Bible is an authoritative code inspired directly by God; as maintaining more vigorously than their contemporaries the principle of Protestantism, — if by Protestantism we mean the assertion of the right of individual judgment. He bestows the highest praise on the Essays of Mr. Williams and Mr. Jowett, because they vindicate the freedom of Scriptural interpretation. He admires Mr. Jowett's especially for the ethical principle which it lays down, that the New Testament (the Sermon on the Mount is the special instance) sets forth precepts which may greatly elevate the tone of our minds and hearts, but which are

alien from men's present condition and practice, and must be received as counsels of perfection rather than as laws.

But all this mode of thinking and speaking he holds to be totally incompatible with allegiance to the formularies of the Church. He deals tenderly with the men, deeming that attachment to the creeds and habits of their childhood is natural, but he denounces the act of subscription as dangerous and immoral, except in those who are prepared to surrender all independence of thought, and to abjure the notion that we can perceive any truths which our forefathers did not perceive. He bestows a passing smile of pity, mixed with moral indignation, upon some members of the English Church not connected with the Essayists, who have adopted, as he says, the theory of the Alexandrian fathers, which has been defunct for sixteen centuries, and who suppose that they can force the Articles of the English Church, which are radically Augustinian, to speak their language. He disposes, with some severity, of the maxims respecting conformity, which are defended in Mr. Wilson's Essay. He proceeds to dwell upon the hopeless condition into which German theology has fallen since 1848, from the efforts of the reactionary party to stifle all thought and inquiry. He believes Strauss and Baur, though exaggerated in many of their opinions, to be valuable witnesses on behalf of the right to speak freely in the midst of civil and ecclesiastical oppression. He earnestly recommends us to abolish clerical subscription; ingeniously urges some of the arguments of Burke against the proposition for abandoning it in the last

century as reasons in favor of that course now; and concludes with sketching a plan of very mild reform, which would preserve all the present conditions of the Church as to its dioceses and parishes, only emancipating it from the thraldom of Creeds and Articles.

I. I have spoken in this tract as if I held the Creeds to be true myself, and as if I thought they were the best guides to the clergy in preaching a Gospel to the people. I have spoken as if I thought we had not overvalued, but undervalued, the Bible; as if I thought it did contain a complete record of God's revelation of Himself. These statements, of course, put me under the ban of the Reviewer. I must be an enemy of toleration and progress if I maintain them. If I am not an enemy of toleration and progress, I must be warping the Creeds, and the Articles of the Church, which reassert the Creeds and protest against certain departures from them, to a sense of my own. Whether this be so is a question of some importance to my own conscience; whether such results are inevitably involved in the reception of Creeds and Articles, is a question for the conscience of every clergyman. It is one of the questions which are specially thrust upon us now; which we cannot evade. The Essays and Reviews generally, Mr. Wilson's Essay particularly, compel us all to examine it afresh. I am thankful for that necessity. If we turn it to a right account we may all be the better for it.

It is well to find a point of agreement with any writer from whom we differ very widely, especially with

any one who attacks us for dishonesty. I heartily agree with the Reviewer in his denunciation of those Churchmen, whoever they may be, who put forward a theory of Clemens or Origen as the true Christian doctrine, and try to fashion our Articles in conformity with it. Such feeble creatures, who play their theosophical fiddles while Rome is burning, are worthy of all the contempt he can pour upon them. As if theosophy, and not God, was to reform the world! As a London clergyman, I may be tempted to feel most indignation against these pseudo Churchmen on *this* ground. But the Reviewer's ground is also a perfectly right and tenable one. Our Articles are, as he says, radically Augustinian. Those who would deprive them of that character destroy, not their accidents, but their very essence.

Augustine stands forth through a number of different centuries as the representative of the doctrine that the will of God is the one ground of all redemption for man, of all right action by man. In this sense he was hailed by Luther in the sixteenth century as the witness that God, and not man, breaks the fetters of the human will; in this sense he was the Father to whom the Jansenists in the seventeenth century, abhorring the name of Luther, resorted as much as he did. There was assuredly a vast difference between them. Luther hated theories with entire hatred. The free grace of God was for him the deliverance from the theories of the schoolmen; he fled to Augustine from Aquinas, who was an Augustinian; he gladly fled from Augustine himself to St. Paul. Jansenius, probably, regarded

Augustine as a great theorist. Still it was on God Himself as the author of all grace, not on a theory about grace, that he relied. And it was *such* a doctrine of grace which made Luther an effectual protester against papal tyranny; Pascal, an effectual protester against Jesuit chicaneries. *Such* a doctrine of grace has been the one effectual testimony throughout Europe on behalf of morality, and on behalf of freedom. It was inscribed on the heart of Coligny; it went forth to battle with William the Silent. God Himself against popes, synods, Catholic leagues; God Himself against injustice, lying, robbery for burnt-offerings, was the watchword in which they fought and fell. The loss of that faith in its direct personal form, the absorption of it into any religious or philosophical theory, the mitigation of it by any Arminian or semi-Pelagian compromises, I hold to be the ruin of moral strength and life to a land; the revival of it to be the sign of coming reformation. That it wants other truths to sustain it — that it becomes a mere Mahometan proclamation of a Divine sovereign without them — I fully believe. That it is the fundamental truth, without which none can live, which awakens Churches and Nations out of their sleep in one age or another, I believe also.

Most thankful I am then to the Reviewer for reminding us that our Articles are based upon this principle. If they had not been, they could not have told the priests in the sixteenth century of the Gospel which they were to preach; if they had not been, they could be of no use for the same purpose to us in the nineteenth. For the

battle whether there is such a Will, and what it is, was the battle of the sixteenth century. The *Westminster Reviewer* has shown us that it is the battle of the nineteenth. The priests of the sixteenth century were disposed to forget that they were to declare this Will to the people. They put the notions and fancies of that century in the place of it. The priests of the nineteenth century are disposed to forget that they must proclaim this Will to the people. They put their own fancies and notions in the place of it. The Articles were wanted then that the people might not be deprived of the knowledge which was their right. I, at least, feel that I want them, to prevent me from robbing our people of the knowledge which is their right.

"But they bind us to an Augustinian theory." On the contrary, they bind us to reject Augustinian theories, and every other theory which interferes with the maintenance of that great principle for which Augustine in his day, Luther in his day, was the witness. The Reformers were not confined by the terms in which Augustine thought or spoke. What belonged to his individual mind they threw aside, for their own sakes; what belonged to the Africa of the fourth century they threw aside for their country's sake. If they had not believed in a Will of God which is above all theories and above all men, they would not have done so; as they did believe in such a Will, they could not help doing so. If we have ceased to believe in a Will of God which is above all theories and all men, we shall hold ourselves tied by the conceits of their individual

minds, or of their centuries. If we believe in such a Will, we shall throw off any fetters which hinder the full proclamation of it. We shall know that in throwing off these fetters we are following the mind of those who imposed the Articles, — their very purpose in imposing them. We shall know that we are taking them in a fuller, stricter sense than their own. Cranmer, Ridley, and Parker may have in their theories and disputations only confessed a supralapsarian election. If we ascend higher, if the circumstances of our time drive us with St. Paul to confess an Election in Christ that was before all worlds, are we not more truly Augustinian than they were, or than Augustine himself was? Are we not in more actual communion with them than we should be if we affected to measure that which was meant for all time by the accidents of a particular time?

If the *National Reviewer* had passed on from those which he calls our Augustinian Articles to those which assert the Word or Son of God to be one with the Father, to have taken man's nature, and to have redeemed the world, he might have struck even a heavier blow than he has struck at those foolish clergymen who wish to galvanize an Alexandrian theory which died in the second century. For he could have shown them how little those Articles which do teach the special *faith* of the Alexandrian doctors indorse or revive any of their special *opinions*. The Word of God, of whom they spoke as the Teacher of Mankind, is set forth as the Living Word through all ages. He is a Person, not a theory; rather the great Deliverer from all theories, the

bond of fellowship to human beings. And, in this case also, if I find that the Articles teach me to assert the perfect union of the Word with the Father, His relation to mankind, His sacrifice for mankind, His universal dominion; and if the compilers of them by any theories of theirs weakened any of these truths, — especially if their theories in any wise prohibit us from saying that the Divine Son perfectly manifested the Will of His Father, and that we can know that Will only in Him, — I have a right to abandon — it is my duty to abandon those theories, — not because I have not subscribed the Articles, but because I have subscribed them.

Once more. The Articles tell me that I am to set forth a Spirit of God as proceeding from the Father and the Son, and as building up a Catholic Church. This is a part of my Gospel to mankind, which I must preach. There have been a number of theories about the presence and operations of the Divine Spirit, — Romanist theories, Quaker theories, Methodist theories, Irvingite theories, philosophical theories. Holding the Spirit of God to be above all these, and to be the Former of a living Society, which is large enough to embrace the universe, I cannot confine myself by one or all of them. But I can believe — I am bound to believe, if I accept the teaching of the Church — that each of these indicates some operations of the Spirit, which I as a Christian ought not to forget or to hide. I dare not therefore deny them, or mock at them. If I deliver my message and ask the Spirit of God to open and to guide my heart, I shall enter into as many of them as it is good that I should enter into; my

message will meet the minds and hearts of some who are possessed by them. But I must keep myself from negations and the worship of opinions, if I want to preserve my allegiance to the Church, and to abide in the Name wherein I have been baptized.

I cannot then adopt the Reviewer's statement that the writers of the "Essays and Reviews" are inconsistent Churchmen, because they assert that there is a progress in illumination respecting divine truth, and that opinions change. If they more fully confessed that God has revealed Himself to us, and that He is guiding us by His Spirit out of the opinions of men and ages, into the Truth which belongs to all ages, they would be more consistent Churchmen. They would then understand better what the difference is between a Church and a Sect, between the acceptance of ancient creeds and the adoption of certain propositions as the expression of the "consciousnesses" of themselves or their time. But though I wish that they and we all perceived this distinction more clearly, I do find it recognized even by those of them who appear the most inclined to novelties. It lies at the root, I suspect, of that strange theory of subscription by which Mr. Wilson has startled the Reviewer, and many members of his own communion more than the Reviewer.

I venture to speak on this point, (1.) Because I am not likely to deal too tenderly with Mr. Wilson, seeing that there is scarcely a writer in the compass of literature whose habits of mind are so alien from my own as his; seeing that those writers of the New Testament who

are dearest to me are those whom he most suspects; seeing that he dislikes such words as Grace, which have for me the profoundest significance, and uses such words as Multitudinism and Ideology, which have for me the least possible significance. (2.) Because I cannot plead that benefit of clergy which the Reviewer grants to Mr. Wilson and others on the score of ancestral prejudice, since I have deliberately put on the bonds which he asks us to cast off; have deliberately abandoned the position which he counts the only tenable one. But, with motives on all these grounds to judge Mr. Wilson severely, and to distinguish my own case from his, I must say that he seems to me, amidst a number of incoherencies, to give proofs of real loyalty to the Church, and to justify his adherence to her formularies.

II. I am willing to be accounted a dishonest man by the Reviewer, by the whole body of Dissenters, by a large body of Churchmen, while I explain myself on this point. I do not undervalue their judgments; perhaps I value them rather too much. But I have learnt to look up to a higher judge than any reviewer; and for the sake of asserting a principle in which I think the existence of the English Church, as well as the morality of her priests, is involved, I will defy the hazard, in the hope, almost in the certainty, that there are a few whose consciences will be made — not easier — but freer and simpler by attending to my words.

That we abandon our natural liberty when we come under the laws of a nation, has been the commonplace of jurists and statists. I hold that commonplace to be a

hateful paradox and sophism. I do not know what natural liberty is. The condition of the savage seems to me an utterly slavish condition. A man never becomes free, never acquires the energies of a freeman, the fellowship of a freeman, the aspirations of a freeman, till he feels the obligations of a citizen. That is the doctrine of the Bible. That was the doctrine of all the ancient republics. That was the doctrine of our own ancestors. The words freeman and citizen were with them almost interchangeable words.

The parallel commonplace to this respecting the nation is, that a man abandons a portion of his spiritual freedom by becoming the member of a Church. That commonplace also I hold to be a hateful paradox and sophism. The condition in which I indulge all my own notions and fancies seems to me one of spiritual slavery; very soon it tends to become one of spiritual inanition. I cannot think freely, nobly, hopefully, till I am in fellowship with others; till my mind, heart, conscience, reason, are under a government. But *whose* government? By being a member of a Church, I understand being in God's kingdom, under His own government. I hold that He has taken me out of my dull, torpid, natural condition; out of the state of an animal, into the condition of His child, whom He has redeemed, that I may know Him and be the partaker of His wisdom and goodness and truth. I cannot speak of choosing that position. He has chosen me for it. I confess that He has, or my parents, or my godfathers and godmothers, confess it for me when they bring me to Baptism. I put myself, or

they put me, into His hands. I learn to lisp His name. I begin to know by degrees that He is governing me, as I know by degrees that my earthly parents are governing me. By various acts of discipline I am brought to have a little glimpse of that world of mystery which is surrounding my spirit, as I am brought to have a few glimpses of the world of mystery with which I converse through my senses. I make innumerable mistakes, and fall into innumerable bewilderments in my attempts to realize the meaning of either region. But these mistakes and bewilderments assure me that I want a teacher for both, to guide my spirit out of its darkness, to prevent my senses and my understanding from being crushed by the objects about which they are meant to give me information.

Now, if creeds are a confession of these facts, the attempt to justify conformity to them by saying, "They express my opinion," "they accord with my opinion," must lead us, I conceive, to continual embarrassment and continual falsehood. If opinion is the ground of the universe, then, by all means, let there be no creeds, or let there be new creeds every century, every ten years, every five years, every month. Let there be a different creed for every country, for every county, for every family, for every man. The whole question is settled one way, — can only be settled one way, — if that is the suppressed premiss in our mind, if that is what we mean, though we do not say it. And to a great extent this *has been* the suppressed premiss in the minds of Churchmen who have pleaded the cause of creeds, and

of Dissenters who have assailed them. Under such circumstances all kinds of sophisms have passed current as defences of conformity; sophisms which can be easily exposed by its opponents; sophisms which too often become palpable to him who uses them; sophisms which conspire most inconveniently and perilously with all the motives which tempt us to be members of a body possessing emoluments and traditional respectability. But beneath all these there has been another and altogether different feeling, which the opponent could not understand, which his arguing could not reprove or reach; which could encounter internal perplexities, and contradictions far more terrible than any arguments; which has the hardest fight of all in sensitive minds with the fear that they may be yielding, not to it, but to personal motives and old attachments. It is the sense of leaving a Father's house, of shaking off ties which we did not create any more than we created the relation to our earthly parents, or brothers, or sisters. It is the dread of renouncing the service of Truth itself for the sake of doing homage to a conception of truth in our particular minds, which may be strong to-day and gone to-morrow.

That this struggle may terminate, we all know too well. But how rarely does it terminate by the mere triumph of an opinion! It ends in a great majority of cases through the weariness of opinion; through the desire to be delivered from the perpetual conflict of opinions; through the longing for a Will which shall determine what we are to think, — what we are to be. More and more of such discontent there must be, if we

do not discover that a Will and Reason higher than that of prelate or pope has given us our place in the Universal Church, and will teach and guide us to hold fast that place, and to do the work which belongs to it. O, how thankfully, and with what pleasure do I read in Mr. Wilson's Essay the tokens that he feels that Reason and that Will binding him to the Church of his infancy, though all the power of self-opinion may be drawing him from it. He is sure that he breathes more freely in that Communion than he could in any other; he will not change it, unless he is forced, for one in which he would feel the bondage of opinion more, the sense of being under the government of a Father and Redeemer less. Is not that a freemason's sign which we should all recognize? Should we not hail it the more eagerly because it comes from one whose tendencies are so much to exalt individual opinions into laws?

III. If the reader has gone so far with me, I think he will be ready to advance a step further. I think he will be prepared to admit that the worship of opinion has been the main cause of all intolerance; and that fixed Creeds, just so far as they deliver us from the worship of opinions, are the protectors of toleration. I am aware that this doctrine will sound to the Reviewer, to all Dissenters, and to a multitude of clergymen, a ludicrous paradox. I must spend a few moments in the illustration of it.

The Reviewer has drawn a contrast far too kind, and too much in our favor, between English Churchmen

and English Dissenters; between English Churchmen and the orthodox Germans. Perhaps he may now be disposed to retract these compliments. At all events they rest, as it seems to me, upon an insufficient ground. Those social advantages of which he speaks may at times make us indifferent about any religious controversy; just as often they will make us vehement against any opinion which Society dislikes. In 1800, it would have been possible to get the votes of 8,000 clergymen, supported by the most influential laymen, for the exclusion of Mr. Simeon from the Church; in 1840 the same number of clergymen, supported by as many influential laymen, might have passed the like sentence upon Dr. Pusey. Each of our schools does its best to extinguish the other; so far as we ourselves are concerned, we can make out no plea for being reckoned less exclusive, less disposed to persecute, than other people.

Yet there must be a justification for a judgment so impartial, so unexpected, as that of the Reviewer. Evidently there is. The attempts of our schools to restrain and persecute each other, are signally and repeatedly defeated. The defeat comes no doubt obviously and directly from the tenderness of our law for property; from the reluctance of those who administer the law to deprive any one of property without very distinct evidence that he has violated the conditions upon which it is held. But there has been another restraint which has acted quite as strongly, though not always consciously, both upon ecclesiastics, upon the lawyers, and upon the lay public. They have felt that

there is a practical bull involved in the notion of our being bound by formularies which we can ourselves bind; of our adopting an old document for our guidance, which receives its sense from the temper and inclinations of this age. No doubt some people are still more alive to what strikes them as the strange contradiction, that we should have creeds which we cannot enforce. To the writers in religious newspapers, to all who believe that there is no power in this world but that of outward punishment and disgrace, — that all God's government has respect to a future state, and that even there it cannot be safely trusted, — this consequence presents itself as supremely ridiculous. But there is a sense in men's minds, deep, though undeveloped, that if the Creeds are true, God really reigns; that the Church is either the region in which His voice is heard above that of human tribunals and public opinion, or that it is a fiction. Churchmen are obliged to confess that they cannot enforce their decrees and excommunications now as they did in the days of old; that they cannot get sentences passed to affirm certain propositions as true, and to denounce others as false. They submit, often with a very ill grace, to the necessity. They say (and say truly) that the liberal doctrine respecting toleration proceeds upon the hypothesis that all Truth is uncertain; that possibly there is no such thing as Truth, or that if there is we can never know what it is. Would it not be more pious to recognize a will of God in what we call a necessity? Would it not be more wise to consider whether He may not be

vindicating the certainty of Truth and the right of man to possess it by that very course of events in which we (taking Locke's Essay for our Bible) have only seen the opposite meaning? Assuming a revelation of God to be real, assuming the Church to be what I have taken it to be, assuming God to be exercising an actual dominion over men, the *a priori* reason for this faith would be overwhelming. Let us see whether the actual experience of the Church is less decisive on the same side.

Taking our start from that Name which is proclaimed in the Creeds, it is the most notorious historical commonplace, that to crush Sabellianism was to call forth Arianism; that those who were most vehement in denouncing Nestorians became Eutychians. Do we, who believe in this Name, feel that such facts as these weaken our belief in it? Do we reverence less the men who fought for it against an immense majority of Churchmen, and against the Emperors? No! we see in all these half truths of the different dividers a witness for the whole truth. We hold that the champions of the faith were great *when* they were contending against the public opinion of the Church and the tyranny of the State; were *then* winning a victory by which other generations were to benefit; that they were little when they were using the force of public opinion and of Emperors to crush opponents; that they were *then* creating heresies among the most earnest, enlisting all baseness, insincerity, treachery, on the side of orthodoxy.

Every subsequent controversy on topics concerning

the life of the Church, though not comprehended in her general Creeds, leads to the same conclusion. The Eucharist stands forth as the mightiest witness of a communion between earth and Heaven, grounded upon a sacrifice made for the world. The Church claims it in this character for all its members. Some are not content so to receive it; they must make it more real by describing it in the terms of logic, though, if it means anything, it must transcend those terms. Others will try to exalt it by feeble rhetoric, though if it has the grandeur and awfulness which we say belongs to it, the use of rhetoric respecting it must be profane. Is there not an excuse for resisting such experiments? Do we not respect Johannes Scotus for his witness in the ninth century? Do we not sympathize with Berengarius for his protests, and his sorrowful recantations, in the eleventh? Such men deserve our reverence for asserting the honor of the Eucharist against those who would degrade it into an idol. But it has been found that, if you merely crush those who turn it into an idol, you call forth those who make it subside into a metaphor; in crushing them you revive the idolatry. In the conflict between these parties, the sense of communion and all its profound blessedness is ever ready to perish in the hearts of the people. God upholds it; it cannot die. The full truth works itself out in His hands through the partial assertions of divines; the poor eat and are satisfied. But by every denunciation and persecution of one school or another, doctors and rulers have done what in them lay to extinguish the Divine truth, and

to send empty away those that are needing the bread and water of life.

The assertion, "God justifieth by faith without the works of the law," was in Luther's mouth a trumpet that roused all Europe, and shook the detestable infidelity and immorality of Leo, and Leo's age. But the Lutheran is able in some little sphere to confute and persecute those who speak of the worth of good works, or who give a different sense to the word justification from that which it bears in his formularies. The punishment is, that the principle loses all its power; it becomes merely the denial of some other. It weakens morality, instead of being a deep foundation for morality.

I shall repeat myself if I refer to that other even more striking illustration of this great historical law, the debates respecting the Divine Will and Human Freedom. I have said already that the emancipation of the nations from the worst forms of ecclesiastical and imperial bondage may be traced directly to the proclamation by the Reformers, in its simplest, nakedest strength, of an all-efficient Divine Will. The moment they had an opportunity in Holland, Switzerland, Scotland, of putting forward dogmatic confutations and penal sentences upon those who denied their propositions, and magnified the will of man in contrast to the grace of God, their own doctrine shrivelled into a dry, dead, cruel formula, powerful only for cursing and for provoking a violent Arminian reaction. It is equally true that the Laudian persecution of Calvinism turned the

assertion of the freedom of the human will into a strange contradiction, and produced a fierce and intense protest against Arminianism; and that the Jesuit persecution of the Port Royal, if it did not stir up any decided Augustinian reaction, has to answer in no slight degree for producing the infidel reaction, which overwhelmed Jansenism and Jesuitism together.

Equally striking, it seems to me, is the evidence which the most recent times have furnished of the same principle. The statements which seem most likely to sap the whole faith of Christendom have been already, and may be still more, the means of deepening it, not by bringing forth a multitude of replies and confutations which have stood us in very little stead, but by evoking some deep slumbering belief. On this ground I entirely agree with the Reviewer, that the publication of the theory of Strauss respecting the Person of our Lord has been a blessing to our age. Numbers in England and in Germany were talking Straussianism without knowing it. Numbers *had* reduced our Lord into a myth. The old Unitarianism, which spoke of Him merely as a Messiah, who appeared in the 4000th year of the world to preach morality, do certain strange acts, and rise from the dead, was wearing itself out. Religious men, who had revolted from that freezing system, were beginning to think of Christ only as *their* Saviour, to mould him according to *their* faith. A vague Christianity was taking the place of Christ in the popular mind. Strauss presented to men their own thoughts distinctly and definitely. He showed them what they meant. So he aroused the

question what He could be whom men had called King and Lord, if He were not the product of the human consciousness, not a human idea of what is excellent. The old creed of a Son who had dwelt with the Father before all worlds, of a Word who is one with the Father, who took flesh and dwelt among men, and in whom they could see the glory of the Father, full of grace and truth, has come forth as *the* alternative to this theory. No notion or doctrine about Christ can be the alternative of it. An actual Christ, divine and human, is the only antithesis to a mythical Christ. Of such a one the Creeds speak; of such a one we may speak if we accept the Creeds.

Nor can I dissent from the Reviewer that Baur's divarication of the Gospels has done a service of the same kind as the mythical doctrine. One is in fact the necessary consequence of the other. The story of a man, to whom his disciples have imputed certain strange powers and heroical or godly endowments, must be told variously and inconsistently by those disciples; opposition of purposes is, on that hypothesis, the natural explanation of their differences; a subsequent attempt to combine them, of their apparent resemblances. The further that scheme of interpretation is pushed, the more ably and learnedly it is worked out, the better; the more must those who believe that Christ is an actual Person be driven from all poor experiments at an artificial harmony, to seek for a real harmony, grounded upon God's purpose to manifest the acts of His Son, and involving the use of different minds for that manifestation. The

two methods will stand out broadly and clearly against each other. That which has been the tacit assumption of Christendom, that which is recognized by the popular mind of England as true, that which explains the reverential and loving expressions respecting the Gospels which occur in the Essay of so unprejudiced a thinker as Dr. Temple, will be disengaged from those mixtures with notions borrowed from the opposite hypothesis, from those attempts to eke out a little faith with a little learning, which have brought it into disgrace. Then we may boldly act upon it with the confidence that it is true, and be thankful for whatever opposes it and so helps to make its truth more evident.

If the orthodox Germans, as the Reviewer says, have not done this; if they have been anxious to suppress the statements of Strauss and Baur; if they have tried merely to controvert their arguments, and not rather to bring forth into fuller clearness the principle which they were controverting; I should be inclined to say they had exhibited great weakness and great faithlessness. But I should hesitate before I ventured to pass a judgment upon foreigners, just as I should not feel myself warranted in condemning the English Independents for their treatment of Dr. Davidson. In their position, such efforts seem to me quite excusable. If they have no creeds, if they merely live by a certain tacit, inherited, or general opinion, I cannot see how they can escape the temptation to persecution except by falling into the apparently opposite temptation of utter indifference. Each tendency will be continually reproducing the other.

But for us to imitate them seems to me, not unnecessary, but suicidal. With the evidence of God's ways and purposes which we see behind us and around us, is it anything less than rebellion against Him to devise schemes for suppressing words which in His divine wisdom He has willed to be spoken, and which it is our own folly and sin if we do not turn to the strengthening of our own faith and of the faith of the world? Our one effort should be to prove that we are not a Sect, that we do not rest upon certain opinions, but upon the revealed name of the Most High God. He has shown us that we can trust in that name; that if we try to stifle even the most imperfect statements respecting it, we hide some side of it from men, we crush some truth which they have need of in their life. What the effect of the opposite policy is in our own days, — how we have produced, and are producing, heresies and unbelief, by the efforts we use to crush heresy and unbelief, — I shall endeavor to show in my third part. I will only add here, that I accept Dr. Temple's doctrine, that toleration is the last lesson which God teaches us; subject to this condition, that with that lesson comes an overwhelming evidence of the might and comprehensiveness of Truth, and of the negative dividing nature of Falsehood, an evidence which has been accumulating through all ages, and which must be brought to bear with tremendous weight upon ours.

IV. If I wanted a proof of the blessing which Creeds may confer upon a land, and of the loss which it would suffer if they were taken away, I should find that evi-

dence in the article which I have been considering. I have been struck with nothing so much in that article as with the writer's fervent desire to rise above opinions and theories, and with his incapacity of rising above them. He must contemplate all the great *principles* which have had power over men, — the belief in a Divine Will, the confession of a Divine Word, — as theories of this man in one century, or that man in another century. And therefore he cannot disengage himself from the logical consequences to which Strauss has been led, that all Christianity is a great and beautiful theory, of which a half-historical, half-mythical Person is the centre; though that conclusion is, I believe, painful and revolting to him. Next, he seems to me to have the most fervent wish for progress; and to be obliged to realize that wish under the strangest and most impossible conditions. For now, in this nineteenth century after Christ, he believes that some great theology is to emerge out of the different instincts of poets, politicians, philosophers. They are discontented with all the notions and beliefs around them. What help, but that all these should be cast off, and that some newer notion and belief should arise out of them? Now I cannot think of theology as anything but the declaration of God. A new theology, formed out of the instincts of men, would be simply the most portentous form of idolatry ever yet seen in the world; in fact, the combination of all previous idolatries. But if I own a revelation of God, an actual Name which He has delivered to us, I can believe that He has been

working through all the ages, and is working now, to bring that Name into fullest light and manifestation. I can receive all the discontents of men, wise or foolish, pious or impious, as witnesses to us that *we* have been darkening that Name by our conceits and idolatries, as calls upon *us* to begin a new life.

V. And this reversal of the idea of progress, arising from the separation of progress and permanence, — from the inability to conceive anything as fixed, and as made known, — extends it, as it must needs do, from the region of theology into that of morals. The idea of the New Testament morality, which Mr. Jowett has suggested in his Essay, is exactly in accordance with the tone of all his Essay. It is the melancholy cry of a very honest and very earnest man looking out upon the world, and seeing our utter nonconformity to that of which he reads in the Bible. He wishes it were not so; he despairs of reconciling the contradiction; and he hints, as a last resource, at the old Romish notion, that there are certain "counsels of perfection" for society, which ordinary men are not expected to follow, though these counsels may have an elevating influence upon their low practice. Such words from such a man may well set us upon the most diligent self-examination; they must indicate something utterly wrong in all society, in religious society especially. But the Reviewer accepts them with delight, as giving the hint of a new mode of interpreting Scripture, and so of removing a stumbling-block out of our path. What! because they actually take us back to a period before the Reforma-

tion? Because they undo the great moral principle which was asserted then with such mighty power? "There is a law which all men must obey; none can break it with impunity. There is a Gospel which answers to the law, sets men free from the curse of it, enables them to fulfil it, not in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the spirit." This was the sixteenth century proclamation which levelled the hills and exalted the valleys; which scattered monastic "counsels of perfection"; which bore witness to every soldier and citizen that he was to live godly and righteously in this present world, looking for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Is it a great progress that we must reverse this doctrine? Or do we need that it should be brought out in its fulness and majesty? A Unitarian of the old school might well tremble to hear that the part of the Gospel which he had always dwelt upon as the especially practical and human part had lost that character, and was treated as at the farthest remove from ordinary business and life. But those who have always felt that morality must be based upon theology; that the revelation of the righteousness of God is the only ground for any righteousness in man; that the Divine law fulfilled in a living person must be translated into a higher region, and must have a might and power which it could not have as a code of morals; those who have accepted the old faith, that Christ, having fulfilled the law of love in His own person, has sent His Spirit to write that law in our hearts; — they will receive these confessions of our deflections from that

law as solemn calls to repentance. They will think that there can be no progress which does not begin with repentance. They will not doubt that we have fallen from the doctrine of the Reformers respecting the common morality, and are relapsing into the perilous notion of a special morality; because we have not proclaimed Christ as the actual King of men; because we have made the Gospel of redemption and of a new life less extensive than the law which proclaims curses and death. Thanks be to God for the discipline by which He is driving us from our false, untenable positions; by which He is showing us that the words which we speak with our lips are deeper and broader, not feebler and narrower, than our apprehension of them.

VI. I cannot leave the *National Reviewer* without two remarks. The first is this: The existence of Creeds and Articles in a land may be a greater benefit to him, and to such as him, than they at all know. They may be unconsciously deriving from that which they reject the sense of an order surrounding them which they did not create, but which upholds them. They may be reminded that the age wherein we live is the inheritor of blessings, the full meaning of which it is to learn, but which are not of one age or another, which belong to eternity, not to time. They may be led by it to feel that these eternal and immutable truths are the only basis of a universal morality, which shall not bend to the notions and habits of one place or another, one period or another. They may be able to hold the ground, which is rapidly slipping from under their feet,

against such vigorous deniers as the writer in the *Westminster Review*, who do confess a permanent order, though one which is guided by no Will; who certainly will not be content to wait till a new theology has been developed out of the instincts of poets, philosophers, politicians; who understand by a mythical Christ a mere imagination; who are not the least likely to be influenced by any counsels of perfection. My second remark has reference to the ingenious and elaborate scheme for our reformation which the Reviewer has drawn out for us. As a pretty model of a Church cut out in paper, I admire that scheme. I cannot accept it as of the slightest value for our actual necessities. The English Church, being set in the midst of a number of sects, must either be the instrument of bringing those sects into fellowship, or she must be lost in them. Being set in the midst of a population of Christian men, she must either be able to declare an actual Christ to those men, or she must cease to believe in any Christ herself. Being mixed, as the Reviewer says, of Catholic and Protestant elements, she must either have a voice which can teach Protestants the full meaning of their Protestantism, Catholics the full meaning of their Catholicism, both of their union in that Name which the creeds of both proclaim, or she must become a miserable *tertium quid*, neither Catholic nor Protestant, rightly despised by those who have preserved any relics of either faith. Being set in a countyr which rules over Mahometans, Hindoos, Buddhists, — every faith that governs the hearts of men, — she must

either be able to meet the thoughts and longings in their minds with the revelation of a reconciling God, a perfect Sacrifice, a living Spirit, or she must see imitations of all that is worst in Mahometanism, Hinduism, Buddhism, driving out that revelation in her own land. It is well to face these alternatives; then we shall know how to appreciate the suggestions for our good which are offered either by amiable on-lookers, or by those members of our body who claim a right to prescribe for us.

PART III.

HOW TO DRIVE OUT AND TO BRING IN STRANGE DOCTRINES.

Hitherto I have drawn my lessons from writers who, for very different reasons, have welcomed the Essays and Reviews; who, though on different grounds and in different degrees, are opposed to the English Church. In this part I shall speak of one of the most conspicuous impugners of the Essays and defenders of the Church. I allude to the writer of the article in the *Quarterly Review* for last January. I have a right to call him conspicuous, for the number of the Review in which his criticism appeared has passed through five editions; and no one, I believe, doubts that it has owed its unprecedented circulation to that criticism.

Our first business is to ascertain, if we can, the main purpose of a composition which must have been read by

so many, and has probably exerted so much influence. On this question the reader of the article can have no doubt. The writer holds a brief for the Church of England against the seven Essayists. His intention is to convict them, one and all, of dishonesty in their professions, of disloyalty to the Church, of unbelief in the Bible. He wishes to get the Church free of them, either by their own act, by the terrors of public opinion, or by some formal decree. I cannot perceive that either in his design or in the quality of his rhetoric he differs esentially from any eminent *Nisi Prius* or Old Bailey advocate. His Essay might fairly rank with the report of any speech of Mr. Serjeant Wilkins or Mr. Edwin James, provided that report had been revised by its author, and had received his latest corrections. There is no doubt this difference in the cases: Mr. Serjeant Wilkins and Mr. Edwin James never had the privilege of wearing a mask. Their addresses could only be directed to a jury of men who were sworn well and truly to try the cause, and a just verdict to give according to the evidence, so help them God. The witnesses whom they examined were able to answer in open court to their questions; a judge took care that the questions should be fair, and the answers exactly recorded.

I allude to these differences. I do not mean to dwell upon them. I rather wish to consider how far that object and that rhetoric, in which the *Quarterly Reviewer* resembles the *Nisi Prius* lawyer, are likely to serve the cause of the Church, how far it is for our interest and well-being that we should consider the Essayists

as men of different beliefs or unbeliefs from our own, how far it should be our aim to separate them further from us than they are already separated. The principles upon which these questions are to be decided I have considered in the previous parts of this Essay. I believe the *Quarterly Reviewer* may throw great light upon their application.

1. There are some points discussed by him at great length, to which I am comparatively indifferent. He maintains that each Essayist is responsible for the opinions of the others. It may be so. I cannot see my way in dealing with these points of casuistry. The writer of an anonymous article in a Review may not be the least responsible for the other articles which appear in that Review. He may have such entire faith in the wisdom or virtue of the Editor that he may be sure nothing will be published in it which ought not to be published. Or the mere fact of his writing without a name may be the discharge of his conscience in the sight of God and man. On the other hand, a person who puts his name openly to a certain portion of a book, to the different portions of which other persons put their names, may be responsible for the whole of it. To a considerable extent I think he is. If he says, as the writers of these Essays say, that they do not pledge themselves to each other's opinions, I assume that they do not. It is the custom in civilized society to trust the word of men who have not shown that they are in the habit of breaking it. If they *prove*, as these Essayists prove, that they are not agreed with each other by put-

ting forth opinions in one Essay which often directly contradict those in another, — by exhibiting a spirit in one Essay which is as unlike as possible to that in another, — I do not rely any longer merely upon their own statement, but on the fact. Nevertheless, I hold that they ought not to have clubbed their compositions together, unless each believed that it was better, for the interests of truth and of mankind, that every one of the others should come forth, than that it should not come forth. And of this I am sure, that having, rightly or wrongly, wisely or unwisely, acted upon that opinion, they are bound, as Englishmen and gentlemen, to abide the consequences of it. I am, therefore, utterly astonished at the language which the Reviewer employs in addressing himself to Dr. Temple. He believes that gentleman to be responsible for the writings of his associates, and yet he entreats him, "with the manly openness which marks his character," to disclaim those associates. Certainly this is a new theory of manly openness! The Reviewer continually appeals, with a flattery which does not strike me as very safe or Christian, to our English honesty. He repeats frequently, that he is himself a plain and honest Englishman, an assertion which might, perhaps, have been as well reserved till it had been disputed. But do honest Englishmen commonly recognize this sort of manly openness as worthy of their admiration? Would not they be very likely to tell Dr. Temple, if he exhibited it, that he was setting an example to his pupils of cowardice and sneaking?

Will the Reviewer carry his appeal from the court in

which he seems to have so much confidence to a higher court? Will he tell Dr. Temple that he ought to sacrifice friends, kinsmen, all earthly considerations, for Christ? Surely he ought. Father and mother, wife and children, the opinions of 8,000 clergymen and 24 bishops, must all be discarded if they would make us false to Christ. But is a schoolmaster to confound his duty to Christ with the desire to preserve a reputation among the parents of his pupils, with the desire for the success of his school? Is he to abandon a single friend, a single point of honor, for these objects? Is not our advocate already, in this opening of the case, giving us a hint of the kind of moral confusions in which he will involve us? And the evidence would be still stronger if we proceeded with his argument against this defendant. He first identifies him with his colleagues, then coaxes and flatters him to renounce them, then insinuates that he is actually communicating to his scholars all the deadly lessons which he says they are diffusing over the land. Could he have taken a more effectual method of leading those scholars, of leading all who know the worth and Christian tone of Dr. Temple's education, to accept the worst parts of the Essays as sound, and to feel intense disgust for those who oppose them?

2. I have been reluctantly detained by this topic. I feel much more the importance of discovering how far we are all answerable for whatever is wrong or unbelieving in the Essayists, than of ascertaining how far they are answerable for one another. But this illustration of the Reviewer's ethical code is not without its value, since

in one of the most elaborate and highly declamatory passages of the article (p. 289), he maintains the essential connection between morality and theology. No one can feel that connection more strongly than I do. The loss of it seems to me the most perilous loss which can befall us. I quite agree with him that indications of that separation — notions that there can be a morality which is not based upon a theology — are to be found scattered about the Essays; may, to a certain extent, be accepted as characteristic of them. There is in them a half-formed opinion, that somehow the righteousness which is required of man, and exhibited by man, may be different from the righteousness of God. Wherever such a feeling prevails there will be — there must be — that imperfect sense of the worth of a revelation which the Reviewer imputes to the Essayists; there will be the dream that we can have a morality based upon merely human conceptions, or upon the circumstances of men in reference to this world. Above all, there will be an unbelief, or only a half-belief in Christ, as manifesting to us the righteousness of His Father. His human acts will be regarded as beautiful human acts, not as exhibitions to us of the Divine Nature.

This tendency to divide our morality from God's morality, and the corresponding tendency to divide the Son from the Father, I do feel to be latent in the Essayists, though I perceive a vigorous struggle against it in nearly every one of them; a protest of the heart and conscience on behalf of the old faith in opposition to the temper of the age. But how fearfully does that temper

of the age come forth in the Reviewer when he is in the act of denouncing the Essayists! Of all the number, Mr. Rowland Williams is the one who has most wounded the hearts of devout Christians, — who has appeared most to take pleasure in wounding them. A man of large culture and knowledge, who might have done much to instruct us all if he had really made use of his scholarship, has despised us so much that he has only given us what must be the merest rags of it, just enough to do us harm, not enough to clear away a single difficulty, or even a single superstition, from our minds. A man who is apparently eager for our reformation has not awakened us to the sense of one of the many sins of which we are guilty; he has rather made us very comfortable under them, since it might seem as if one of our greatest ignorances and errors is that we have supposed words to proceed from Isaiah which may possibly have proceeded from Baruch. With such an offender at the bar, what might not a clever counsel for the prosecution effect? The *Quarterly Reviewer* is quite aware of his advantage. He pursues it to the utmost. But see into what peril he brings us while he is confounding Mr. Williams. Thus he winds up a very dashing address to his invisible jury on the subject of miracles: —

"There is no escape from this. If He wrought the works, the whole rationalistic scheme crumbles into dust. If He wrought not the works, He was in truth the deceiver that the chief priests declared Him to be. Dr. Williams makes a miserable effort to escape from this dilemma. 'By appealing,' he says, 'to GOOD WORKS

(*sic*), however wonderful, for His witness, Christ has taught us to have faith mainly in goodness,' (p. 51,) *as if the appeal of Christ was mainly to the inherent goodness, and not to the manifested power of the works, — a fallacy so transparent that it is needless to do more than enunciate its terms.*" — *Quarterly Review*, pp. 283, 284.

Can any confidence or security be greater than this? *The fallacy is so transparent that it is needless to do more than enunciate its terms.* And yet those priests who called our Lord a deceiver did, according to the Evangelists, bring *this* charge against Him, *He casteth out devils through Beelzebub, the chief of the devils.* And our Lord spoke of that as the great blasphemy of all, because it confounded the acts of the HOLY Ghost with the acts of the EVIL Spirit. Is this also a transparent fallacy? Is not the whole Gospel involved in it? Did not the priests deny Christ, because they knew neither Him nor the Father; because they believed God to be a mere power, which might manifest itself in one kind of wonders or another, which they thought could not manifest itself in shame and weakness; — whereas the eternal goodness and love we worship and adore, was never so manifested as in the death upon the cross. Thus in the act of attacking the most offensive of all the Essays, the *Quarterly Reviewer* has contrived to announce a doctrine which, if it were pushed to its consequences, as he pushes the Essayists to their consequences, would involve the subversion of the whole Revelation of the Son of God, — above all, would show that Christian morality has not a basis in that Revelation.

Proceeding in his demolition of the same defendant, the learned counsel complains that the objections which Mr. Williams raises against the ordinary English belief in the Bible indicate a very indifferent acquaintance with German theology. I dare say it is so. I am not a competent judge. But the Reviewer goes on to tell us that we may be quite comfortable in our English belief, because Hengstenberg, whose Christology has been translated by Clark of Edinburgh, has answered all the German cavils; because especially he has proved that the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah was always considered purely Messianic by the Jews, till some of them found it convenient to invent another interpretation, for the purpose of overthrowing the claims of Jesus to be the Messiah. I do not know whether this is shallow or profound scholarship, but I am sure it is a most perilous ground to sustain English faith upon. Is Hengstenberg then infallible more than other German doctors? May not his learning break down, his arguments be confuted? Or am I bound to accept the very doctrine which the Reviewer complains of when it is put forth by Mr. Jowett, and to hold that the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah *cannot* refer to the Jewish nation, or to any holy man, because, in the highest sense, I receive it as belonging to the Lamb that was slain? Do we not see all through Scripture

> "..... marks that glow,
> Of the true Cross imprinted deep
> Both on the Shepherd and the Sheep"?

May I not learn something of Mr. Williams, — shallow scholar as he is said to be, — without adopting his

sneers, or his mere negations? May not what he tells me of the application of those and other words to the times in which they were written make me understand better what the Evangelists mean by the *fulfilment* in the Head of that which was first realized in some member of the body? Thoughts like these might, perhaps, save the faith of many a man who is perplexed by the doubts which Mr. Williams and others have suggested. They might give a new sense to some of the unity of the Bible, and of the relation of that unity to the union of men in Christ. But they must be all banished, because the object is to find a confutation from a Berlin critic, if no other can be had, which may overthrow Mr. Williams.

3. In his treatment of Mr. Goodwin, the Reviewer has illustrated even more strikingly the effects of partial rhetoric in robbing the theologian of a great opportunity for good, whilst he is convicting a layman of propagating mischief. Mr. Goodwin expresses his entire dissatisfaction with the theories by which clergymen have endeavored to reconcile the first chapter of Genesis with the facts of astronomy and geology. He indicates at the same time his sense of the simplicity and beauty of that chapter. He then overthrows that admiration by a marvellous notion that Moses was an early Descartes, busy with the conception of possible vortices out of which the world might have issued. Might it not have been possible to awaken him to a perception of this inconsistency? Might not a person evidently so honest have been asked, whether there must not be

some idea of the universe which regards man, and not the sun, as the centre of it; whether he can himself part with such an idea; whether the presence of it is not the cardinal point of difference between the Mosaic and any other scheme of creation; whether, connected as it is with the whole revelation which follows, it is not the mightiest vindication of the right of man to look above nature, and to investigate nature; whether, if it were lost, we should not crouch to nature, as Hindoos do, full as their cosmogonies are said to be of brilliant hints respecting the ages of which geologists speak? Such lessons would have been as profitable to us as to Mr. Goodwin. But as the object is to make us judges of him, how could the Reviewer impart them to us?

4. Mr. Wilson has spoken in his Essay of a "verifying faculty" in man, by which he judges whether the pretensions of any book or teacher are to be accepted or rejected. This writer is fond of unusual phrases. He could not talk like the ancients of a faculty of discerning truth and falsehood. The counsel sees his advantage. He torments the phrase in the style with which our courts have made us so familiar. Unhappily, he torments something besides the phrase and its author. What he says strikes directly at Butler's doctrine of a conscience. It strikes far more directly at *these* words: *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. A stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him, for they know not the voice of strangers. . . . . All that ever came before me are thieves*

and robbers; but the sheep did not hear them. Is there not a "verifying faculty" here? To deny it is to deny the Divine authority; to scorn it is to scorn all the most blessed human experience. And it is to leave us without a Gospel. For is not this the language of the greatest preacher of the Gospel in the first ages? Must it not be the language of the real preacher in every age? "Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy we faint not; but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty; not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; *but by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.*" Some of the wit of the Reviewer must, I am afraid, fall upon the head of St. Paul. He certainly spoke to that in man which I might call the "verifying faculty," if I did not think his language much stronger, much simpler, much more efficacious against all who would substitute a mere scheme of evidences addressed to the intellect respecting the authority of Scripture, or of the Church, for a direct message to the man himself, from the God who has created and redeemed him.

In the same spirit, the Reviewer tells, with irrepressible glee, what sounds to me a most melancholy story respecting the share which Mr. Wilson took in the attack upon Dr. Newman's Ninetieth Tract. He might have carried the narrative back a few years, and told of the share which Dr. Newman took in convicting Dr. Hampden of treason against the same Articles. The records are worthy to be preserved; they are pro-

foundly instructive. The Reviewer uses them, or so much of them as he cares to repeat, for the purpose of procuring a verdict against Mr. Wilson. That is his business; he could not have shown his talent as an advocate better than in availing himself of such a point, and in working it as he has worked it. But, if it is not our business, if we have another object than to get a sentence against Mr. Wilson, we may perhaps draw a different moral from the tale. Dr. Hampden, Dr. Newman, Mr. Wilson, all accepted the Articles, as we have every right to believe, in good faith, when they took orders. There came a time to each of them when some side of the doctrine which these Articles treat thrust itself prominently before them, when another lay in shadow. Must there not come such times to all men who think, who read, who are in earnest? Is it not more desirable that there should be men in the Church who have a certain attraction to one side of Christian truth, — who, in their zeal for that, become for a time indifferent to every other? Is it not desirable that they should speak out their convictions, even if they do involve some forgetfulness of that which to many of their brethren is most precious? All this is good; as I have urged in what I have said in answer to the *National Reviewer*, it is one of the blessings of having Articles, which are witnesses to us of a whole Gospel, that we can permit these partial statements. But it becomes utterly bad, if you thrust the Articles upon a man just when he is obviously incapable of recognizing more than one portion of them. Then you drive him

to subterfuges; then he will put forth a Ninetieth Tract; then he will try to show that the framers of the Articles meant to cheat him, — so he may cheat them. What is the consequence? If he had retained his love for the Church, his reverence for his forefathers, he would have adhered to it in spite of his opinions; he might have clung to it the more, because it restrained him from succumbing to them. But your clever arts have almost destroyed his affection; he has still so much of it left that he will spin subtle webs of the intellect, rather than part with you altogether. You complain of him, as you reasonably may. You tell him that it is his duty to go. He casts one lingering look at that which had been dearer to him than the house of his infancy, and he obeys your mandate. He leaves you to hate you and curse you. *Woe to the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come: but woe to that man through whom the offence cometh.* O Priests of England! does not that sound ring through the ages? Can it have come from any other than the Head of the ages? Ought not each one of us to tremble as he listens to it.

5. The Reviewer, speaking, be it remembered, still under a mask, tells those who have contributed to these Essays that they cannot, consistently with moral honesty, continue clergymen of the Church of England. To those who have received orders in the Church, who have believed that they were called thereto by the Holy Ghost, who have supposed they had the most awful treasures in trust for their fellow-men, this must appear

a rather light method of treating such an act as that of abandoning an office which has been bestowed under such sacraments, by such an authority, for such an end. Seeing, however, that the Reviewer speaks of moral honesty, he refers the matter to another tribunal. God is the Judge of moral honesty. It can do none of us harm to be reminded that we stand before that Judge, that He is requiring from us all an account of our stewardship. That is surely true. We do not hold it of Reviewers, or of the readers of reviews; we hold it of Him. And He is very manifestly summoning us all, from the Pope of Rome to every village curate in Romish or Protestant lands, to answer how we have used it, what we are doing with it. If the writer of the article in the *Quarterly* had told us this, would five editions of it have disappeared so rapidly? But might he not have done more for us than by flattering us with the thought that we are believers, and that the Essayists are unbelievers?

6. And if his clever advocacy is of so little help to us as individuals, what has he done for the unity of the Church? In the most rhetorical passage of the article he has entreated High-Churchmen and Low-Churchmen to merge their differences in a common attack upon these six men: that, he thinks, may establish a bond of durable peace between them. Merciful God! to what is he leading these schools? They have precious truths, which they have inherited from their fathers, or won for themselves. Not one can we afford to lose; each is worthy to be lived for and died for. And this is the

way of reconciling them! To drown them in a dead negation of other men's opinions; in a fellowship of hatred. Accursed arrangement! Peace that is worse and more deadly than the most savage wars! Every High-Churchman, every Low-Churchman, who would not be a traitor to the traditions of his fathers, to his own deepest convictions, should protest with heart and soul against it, should cry to God against it. And yet it is to this that confutations are leading us. If they are regarded as the means of redressing the evils of the Church, this hollow, treacherous suspension of hostilities between two foes till they have wreaked their vengeance upon a third and weaker foe, will be the substitute for the prayer, *That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they may be one in Us;* for communion in the sacrifice of Him who died for all.

Priests of the English Church, you have been called upon again and again in the last few months to remember your Ordination Vow, — how that you were pledged to do what in you lay that all heresies and strange doctrines might be driven out of the Church. Most earnestly do I beseech you to recollect that pledge, and all other pledges which you made when you were sent forth with authority to preach God's Word, and to administer His Sacraments. Remember that you are bound to consider *how* you may most effectually drive out those strange doctrines and those divisions which are so dangerous to your flocks and to yourselves. One method has just been set before us by a person whom we do not know, but who claims a right to advise and guide us.

He has, I think, shown us very clearly whither that method must lead. He has declaimed against loose statements about the Scriptures, and has himself sanctioned statements respecting it which would turn it into a dead letter, and make our preaching of it vain. To check schism, he has encouraged ordained ministers to make a schism. To bring about peace, he has urged opposing parties to seek a bond of union in a common enmity. He has added one more proof to those which every page of ecclesiastical history supplies, that there is no such promoter and begetter of strange doctrines as he who merely contradicts them, — no such render of the Church as he whose eyes are always awake to discover how other men are rending it. Our Ordination Vow, then, binds us *not* to follow him, *not* to go one step in the road which he would mark out for us.

But have our other counsellors taught us nothing? The *National Reviewer* would emancipate us from our creeds. If we have no Gospel to proclaim to men, — if we may not tell them that the Father has sent His Son to redeem the world, and that He has redeemed it, and that He is King of it, and that His Spirit is working through all human life and society, — I do not see what our creeds are for, because I do not see what our function is for, what our existence is for. Let us be emancipated from them by all means; but let us be emancipated from our whole office. Let us frankly tell our people that it was a delusion to dream there was such an office. Let us say openly: "If there are any glad tidings for men, we do not know that there are: they

have not been intrusted to us." But if there are such glad tidings, let us be thankful for the words that set them forth to us. And let us utter those words as if they were a message from God; as if they did contain a Revelation from Him. Then if people ask us, Where did you get the books which tell you of this Revelation? — we can answer them, Is it a Revelation to you? Does it tell you of yourselves? Does it tell you of Him whom you are feeling after, if haply you may find Him? If it does, you will receive it as God's Revelation of you and of Himself, through whatever hands it comes to you, wherever we found it, whether we are cheats or true men. If it does not come to you as a revelation of God, no evidence which we can bring to convince you that it is will have any power over you. You may yield to the evidence as a matter of form and propriety; you may reject it when the fashion of your circle is to reject it; which you do is not very important. If you receive the Bible out of courtesy and compliment, it will not be a Bible to you; it will hold you back from no evil way, — it will guide you into no good way. But if it does speak to you as a Bible, — if it does come to you as God's Word, — you may look fearlessly at all questions which concern it. So far as you have leisure to pursue them honestly and manfully, they will do you good; you can be safe without them if you have no such leisure; whatever the result is, God will turn it to your benefit.

This lesson would be very imperfect if we had not the help of the *Westminster Reviewer* to deepen and establish

it. He has made us understand very clearly that questions about the authenticity of the books of Scripture, about ecclesiastical authority, about any of the matters which we are wont to dispute of with each other, are not in the least interesting to the young men of this generation, except so far as they show how little we are agreed among ourselves, how little confidence we have in the conclusions which we ask them to accept. They have gone beneath all these controversies. They smile at those who fancy they can meet their difficulties by some modification of our demands upon their assent to our standards. Is there a WILL governing human beings at all? is there any will in man to be governed? *Here* is the doubt with which their minds are haunted, by which some of them, I hope and believe, are tortured. I do not venture to believe it about all. I know there may be for a time a delighted acquiescence in the sense of a mere natural order, which no Will has created, over which no Will presides. Even that delight, because it indicates something of passion and fervor, because it implies a will in those who entertain it, troubles me less than the cold, contented indifference of numbers who have actually in their hearts cast off the belief of any Divine Will, who think that God has no concern with the movements of nations, or with anything which interests them, and who, *therefore*, do not care how much we talk and argue and preach; who, *therefore*, wish us to put down all who break in upon our quiet assumptions; who do not like our orthodoxy to be shaken, because they hold it to be a lie. It is with this atheism that we

have to fight; this is more terrible than all strange doctrines; this gives the *virus* to them all. But oh! have we not first to fight with it in ourselves? Has it not crept into our hearts? Has it not made the creeds and the Bible untrue to us? Is not this the secret of our fears, lest seven men should be able to destroy them, though all the wealth and respectability of the land, though the traditions of twelve centuries, are on their side? Brethren, if that is all which is on our side, the fear is reasonable. Seven men, or one man, may undermine that which has only the support of wealth and respectability and tradition. But I implore you, by the mysteries of Passion week and Easter week, solemnly to repent of the thought that this is all which is on our side. I implore you to reflect that these were *not* on the side of Him whom we declare to be the Lord of heaven and earth. The kings of the earth were against Him; God's own priests were against Him. But His Father was with Him; therefore is He highly exalted, and has a Name which is above every name. If, in the might of God, we do proclaim that Name; if we can say from our hearts, He has shown to us that Will which created the heaven and the earth, and all the host of them; He has shown us the Will to which the wills of all emperors, priests, nations, must bow, or they will be broken in pieces; we shall find a response to our words when we look for it least. Those who could not listen to us, or care for us when we spoke in a lower, feebler tone, will feel that we know what they want, that this is a message which we did not invent. Natu-

ralists, who did not care much while we argued with them about the story of creation, still less while we argued with them about all the evidences of adaptation which prove an intelligent Creator, may listen to the strange news that by the Divine Word the order was made, that in Him is life, and that His life is the light of man; and may find in these mystical utterances the very meaning of creation, that which contradicts none of their discoveries, but transcends them and harmonizes them, — that which shows that Moses could only understand the order of the universe in reference to man, because he could only understand man in relation to God. And statesmen may perceive that another Will than theirs has been guiding the nations, and is guiding them now, or that they must sink into absolutism or anarchy, and be utterly lost. And the people will feel that the High God has been redeeming them for His sons and daughters, and that they are inheritors of a kingdom whereof there is no end. And Jews, Turks, infidels, heretics, may learn that the Head of the Universe poured out His blood for them as for us, and that in Him they can be one fold with us under one Shepherd. Priests of England! this Gospel is committed to us. Shall we not humble ourselves before God, because we have proclaimed it so ill, and believed it so little? Shall we not own before Him that the infidelity of England is owing mainly to us? Shall we turn away from His voice which is bidding us repent of our own iniquities, and think that we can do Him service by casting stones at our brothers?

III.

THE ATONEMENT

AS A FACT AND AS A THEORY.

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III.

ON THE ATONEMENT.

We are all used to speak of the Atonement as a vital feature of the Gospel; and of late years we have heard a good deal about *denying the Atonement*, an accusation which we feel to involve the charge of robbing that Gospel of all that gives it its distinctive character and value.

Now if a man makes no such accusation against his brother, he may not perhaps be called on to ask himself with any strict scrutiny what he means by the *Atonement*. It may perhaps, without blame or fault of his, merely stand in his mind as a general term for the whole process whereby his Saviour wrought out his deliverance from sin, and from the consequences of sin; and absence in his case of vocation to study, of the habit of meditation, of the right resources for pursuing the inquiry, may excuse his having no accurate apprehension of the revealed particulars contained under that general term.

But the case is very different if we charge a Christian Teacher with denying the Atonement, or if we deal in any way with such a charge against him. Then we are imperatively bound to examine the doctrine to the best of our ability, and anxiously to inquire whether or not

the charge has reference to its substance, or to theories which, be they sound or unsound, are but accidentally fastened upon that substance. And if capable from education and habit of pursuing this inquiry, we are bound for our own sakes to do so, inasmuch as the New Testament demands intelligent insight of its disclosures, and as a confusion of accident with substance in the case of those disclosures is a peril to ourselves from which we ought to use all available means of being preserved.

Now it cannot be denied that this general term, *the Atonement*, does cover a variety of statements, some of which being discrepant, cannot be all true. The word itself, I need scarcely say, means merely *reconciliation*, *bringing together*, making *to be at one*. It is a merely English word, with no exact counterpart in either of the original tongues of Holy Scripture. The only instance in which it is used in the English version of the New Testament is Rom. v. 11, where it is employed very well as the translation of *καταλλαγή*. In ordinary acceptation among us, however, it stands as a general term for the whole notion of Christ's death on the Cross as effecting our deliverance; and that death being closely associated with the notion of expiatory sacrifice, the thought of expiation has become more or less bound up with the use of the word atonement. Hence we have in great measure ceased to use it in the old way. We do not now speak with Shakespeare of things that were at variance *atoning*, but we speak of a man *making atonement for*, or *atoning for*, what he has done amiss. It is so

used in the English Old Testament, and almost universally both in theological and other language at the present day.

By *the Atonement*, therefore, we mean the whole work whereby our Lord wrought out our deliverance on the Cross, and it is thus, as I have said, a general term, containing many particulars, both of scriptural and of habitual, it may be extra-scriptural, thought on the subject. It is to the inquiry whether all those particulars be scriptural, whether they belong to the substance of the scriptural disclosure, or are theories respecting that disclosure, which, be they warrantable or unwarrantable, ought not to be regarded as other than theories, and, if unimposed by the Church, as altogether open questions, that we must now address ourselves.

Now a very slight survey of opinion will show that there has been a variety of such theories in the Church. Closely bound up with our general notion of Atonement, of *Purchase*, of *Ransom*, are those of Redemption. The language both of the Apostles and of our Lord has given rise to, and abundantly vindicated, the association. But it would be difficult to tie the various cases of that language to any one theory. The notions of Purchase, of Ransom, of Redemption, are indeed so clearly exhibited in earthly examples as to require no explanation themselves. But when we come to ask, What is the scriptural connection of them with the benefits procured by Christ's death, to whom the purchase-money was paid, and from what men were ransomed and redeemed; we shall fail, I think, in extorting

from Scripture a single answer, uniformly given to us. To take one instance. In 1 Pet. i. 18, we have an impressive sentence, which we read on in our habitual key of thought, but are surprised to find that it does not end on the key-note. "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from" (it is here that modern ears and thoughts will anticipate a different ending) "your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers." Quitting Scripture for a while, we find, as I have said, a variety of theories in the Church respecting the ransom, the redemption, effected by Christ's death. About the oldest, and one which has had the longest ascendency, is that which represents the claim on us to have been the Devil's, and Christ's suffering, bloodshedding, and death to have been purchase-money and ransom, paid to him, whereby we have been redeemed from his hold on us. This theory, at least as old as Origen, lasted till the time of Anselm, if indeed it did not partially survive him. It will, I imagine, be set aside as altogether untenable by every school in the modern Church; nor have we any other concern with it than to appeal to its undoubted prevalency through ages, as a proof that a theory of any kind must be distinct from the substantial Truth on this subject, which surely was the life of true Christians in every age.

By Anselm it is altogether set aside. He rightly argues that the Devil cannot have a lawful claim of any kind; and for this, the previously received theory, he substitutes that of satisfaction to God's justice. Indeed,

of phrase as well as theory, he is generally considered the author. Sin involved, according to him, a debt to God, with the payment of which God's essential attribute of justice did not permit Him to dispense. It was paid for us by Christ's human obedience, — that obedience which was even unto death. This is the point which Anselm argues out in his remarkable treatise, "*Cur Deus Homo.*"

Anselm, as I have said, is considered the author of the prevalent theology of the West on this subject, and, on the whole, rightly so. But it is often overlooked that he came greatly short of it. The very title of his work may serve to indicate this; for it shows that he did not separate, with the modern theologian, the death from the previous human life of the Redeemer. It was the whole susception of humanity by the Son of God, and presentation of that humanity in spotless holiness to the Father, — a holiness which received its crowning manifestation in the death on the cross, — which Anselm regarded as the payment of the debt which humanity owed. It was, as has been well observed, a *satisfactio activa*, not a *satisfactio passiva*, which he contemplated. Dr. Thomson considers Baur as going too far "in maintaining that the idea of a vicarious satisfaction by punishment is altogether strange to the theory of Anselm." ("Bampton Lectures," note, p. 296.) What follows will justify, I think, the German theologian, and show that the idea in question is not only *strange* to Anselm, but is absolutely shut out by him. For what is the real penalty

of sin, — that which eternal justice has everlastingly bound up with sin? Not suffering merely; for though suffering may be connected with sin, love can embrace it as a privilege; not outward, temporal death merely; for that can be made a holy and blessed thing: but misery. Sin and misery, — misery, the invasion of death, not on the body, but the spirit, — these must ever be indissolubly joined. Now, Anselm emphatically denies that our Lord, in the very worst of His sufferings, was or could be miserable.*

His theory of satisfaction, however, led to this other notion of Christ being punished for our sin. Neander thinks he finds the first open declaration of it in Pope Innocent III. It was, perhaps, adopted by Aquinas.† Anyhow, as the crowning pinnacle of a structure arrests the eye more immediately than any other part of it, and is felt to determine its whole character, this theory of Christ being punished in our stead, when once adopted, became the predominant one in Western Christendom, and, though enforced in no decree of the Church, was probably seldom doubted by the leaders of the Reformation. When it had once entered into men's minds, it needs scarcely be pointed out how it must have gathered round itself all such passages of Scripture as speak of Christ being wounded for our

* *Cur Deus Homo*, II. 12.

† I say, *perhaps* adopted; for though it be undeniable that Aquinas recognizes a penal element in our Lord's sufferings, he connects it with the thought of identification with us, rather than with that of substitution for us; and between these thoughts there is a mighty difference. (Summa iii. Quæst. xlvi. xlviii.)

transgressions and bruised for our iniquities, as bearing our sins, suffering for sins, the just for the unjust, &c.* It is this theory which is probably present more or less to most men's thoughts when they speak of our Lord's *vicarious* sufferings; and it is to a real or alleged denial of this, or a real or alleged confession of doubt or misgiving respecting this, that I conceive they refer when they speak of certain eminent Christian teachers as denying or setting aside the Atonement. It is, moreover, against this that the objections mainly point of those who are opposed to the teaching of the Church, as on other grounds, so on that of her doctrine of the Atonement.

In calling attention to the comparatively modern date of this theory, I do not mean to disparage it merely on that account. I believe the Church, in so far as she is living and healthy, to be in every age a learner; I believe that so as the roots be in Scripture, the flowers and fruits must be most precious, however long they may have been in appearing above ground. But, granting this, and not, therefore, setting aside the prevalent theory merely because it is modern, I may yet appeal to this fact of its being modern as an argument that, even if true, it cannot be essential; and that they to

* Of course, if such passages teach the doctrine in question, there is an end of our inquiry. But this is just what many do not succeed in perceiving. Anyhow, they can be read and contemplated, and their language adopted by us, without committing us to the vicarious or any other theory. For when I venture to look at our Lord's human life and death, I see, *as a fact*, that He did bear our sins and carry our infirmities, and I can look at the fact all the better for not burdening myself with a theory about it.

whom it presents insuperable difficulties, they who fail to find it in Scripture, and they who feel too uncertain about it to adopt it, are not, therefore, to be pronounced heretical, or regarded as strangers to that vital and central truth of redemption by the blood of Christ which may be dearer to them than their lives. In the strong language of Gregory Nazianzen, we may affirm, that "the mode in which Christ has redeemed us is a matter in which we may err without danger"; or, with Bishop Butler, we may say, "how and in what particular way it (Christ's sacrifice) had this efficacy, there are not wanting persons who have endeavored to explain; *but I do not find that the Scripture has explained it.* We seem to be very much in the dark concerning the manner in which the ancients understood atonement to be made, i. e. pardon to be obtained by sacrifices. And if the Scripture has, as surely it has, left this matter of the satisfaction of Christ mysterious, — left somewhat in it unrevealed, all conjectures about it must be, if not evidently absurd, yet at least uncertain. . . . . Some have endeavored to explain the efficacy of what Christ has done and suffered for us beyond what the Scripture has authorized; others, probably because they could not explain it, have been for taking it away, and confining His office as Redeemer of the world to His instruction, example, and government of the Church." (*Analogy*, Part II. c. V.) It can hardly be heresy to hesitate with Butler; and even if we venture to deny that Christ's sufferings were penal, we may take shelter, according to Baur, under no less a protector than St. Leo the Great.

Neither will I at present go into all the questions which the theory almost necessarily awakens in a thoughtful mind. I will merely refer to two results of it which have actually occurred, and which may well make us pause before we commit ourselves to it. One of these relates to what we are to believe respecting our Lord; the other, to what we are to believe has been gained by mankind from His work.

I. When men had learnt to regard the Lord on the Cross as a substitute suffering the penalty due to their sins, they were led to ask in what way did His sufferings amount to this. What was that full penalty of sin which He paid? It could not have been mere temporal death; for it was held that the true penalty of sin amounted to something infinitely more awful than that, and from temporal death He did not seem to have delivered us. Accordingly, they were led to the strange and revolting notion that the infinite nature of Christ rendered Him capable of suffering in a limited, what would have had to pour itself out on finite beings throughout an unlimited time, — a thought which one really dares not bring out into distincter statement. So pressing, however, is the difficulty, that they who are considered the great champions of vicarious satisfaction — such as Archbishop Magee — are forced on evasions which almost seem abandonments of the point for which they are contending, — the learned prelate just referred to telling us that we ought to regard our Lord's passion, not as the real punishment for our sin, but as a *substitute for that punishment*, divinely

provided and accepted. *Punishment*, he says, it could not really be.

We have seen already that Anselm protests against the possibility of our Lord's having ever been *miserable*, and that misery is the real penalty of sin. Separation from God and from good is the only wretchedness, separation from God and from good is of necessity bound up with moral evil, and is in its completion the second death. Not for a single moment dare we suppose that the Only Begotten, who is in the bosom of the Father, the Holy One of God, could have been in this condition.*

II. If our Lord really was the substitute of sinners, enduring in His person the full penalty of their guilt, that penalty must needs have been exhausted in Him, and cannot, according to any idea of justice, be re-exacted. Accordingly, it must be altogether removed from those in whose stead He died. But it is believed to be enforced on numbers of men. Hence the inference that He died only for the elect. The doctrine of Particular Redemption is the most repulsive part to many minds of what is called the Calvinistic Creed, and it is certainly one into which no biblical interpretation could by itself have led any man, seeing that nearly the whole dealings of its advocates with the Bible consist in laboriously explaining away the great declara-

* The *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani*, cried out from the cross, is surely at no variance with what I say. We dare not, while we reverently listen to it, shape dogma out of that cry. Independently of the fact that the Psalm to which it refers us is no utterance of despair, but of perfect filial affiance in God expressed out of the depths, the very use of the first possessive pronoun, *my* God, gives the clew to its interpretation.

tion that Christ died for all; but it followed from admitted premises with adamantine logical necessity, and I apprehend it is to those premises, quite as much as to the remaining four points of Calvinism, that we owe the ascendency of the doctrine; certainly not, as I have just intimated, to any even seeming countenance which it receives from Scripture.

Leaving, then, the theories of Atonement, it remains to ask, What is the substantial truth on which they have been fastened? — a question which has not perhaps been very vigorously pressed by those who have disembarrassed themselves of the theories. I have neither time nor inclination at present to go over all the dilutions of truth which have been put forth on the matter; and will pass on at once to that masterly dissertation of Coleridge in the "Aids to Reflection," which has probably told largely on men's thoughts in our day, and which seems to be echoed, though, after the laws of the echo, with fainter sound and feebler emphasis, by Professor Jowett.

According to Coleridge, Christ's work on our behalf is never named from anything in itself, but from its known effects upon us. The analogies to sacrifice, redemption, satisfaction of a debt, are all to be sought in those effects, never in their cause. That cause is an act which belongs to the sphere of transcendents, a mystery into which we may not look, and which we must not dare to attempt explaining. But it has effects which are very analogous to the effect of the appointed sacrifice in the reinstatement of the Israelite in his na-

tional position and privileges; to the effect of adequate ransom as promising the freedom of a captive; to the effect of complete payment by another as my discharge from a debt which I could not liquidate myself.

Only in the writings of St. John does Coleridge see the redeeming work spoken of in the light of a single governing thought, that of Regeneration.*

I cannot deny that there is great wisdom and truth in this representation of the matter; nor let it be imagined, as it might, on a hasty glance, to be a mere explaining away of the Atonement into a series of varying images and analogies, each of use on the occasion, and *pro re nata*, but none of abiding and dominant truth. Let it be remembered that all those effects in such fine analogy to well-known transactions of earthly life are ascribed by Coleridge to a causative and transcendent act, which, as such, must be beyond the reach of the human understanding, and inexpressible by human words. Still, though true, it does not seem to me the whole revealed truth. Our Lord's redemptive act is indeed deeply mysterious; but I cannot help thinking that more of itself is revealed to us than is allowed by Coleridge; I cannot help thinking that we are enabled and enjoined to look at and into itself, instead of merely contenting ourselves with its effects; and, whilst I admit that three out of the four aspects in which he presents it may be but figures expressing only those effects, and not their cause, I protest against applying this canon of interpretation to the remaining

* "Aids to Reflection," pp. 315-317.

one. Surely our Lord's death is not merely occasionally, not merely with reference to an immediate context, but uniformly, in every variety of context, in every phase of thought, set forth as *a sacrifice*.*

In the idea, then, of sacrifice, I find the one governing view of Christ's work, to which all others are but subsidiary and accidental. Relatively to the figurative exhibition of the sin from which it delivers me, that work is no doubt well spoken of as a redemption; relatively to the figurative exhibition of the tremendous relation in which I stood to the Divine justice as a debt, it is no doubt well spoken of as the payment of that debt; but it is well spoken of as these because it is in deed and in truth a sacrifice, — yea, *the* sacrifice which contains in itself the fulness of that idea to which other sacrifices were but dimly and variably pointing, and after which their offerers were more or less consciously craving.

But what is sacrifice? To many modern ears the word sounds little more than a synonyme of that notion of punishing a substitute for the real offender, to which I have already referred. But, even if we were to grant that any ancient sacrifice, either Heathen or Hebrew,

* I need scarcely say to those who are acquainted with his writings, that this position is the very opposite of that maintained by Professor Jowett. ("Epistles of St. Paul," Vol. II. pp. 554–568.) The great charm and value of much of this author's discourse has never dissipated, for me, the mystery in which to my mind some of the first principles of his are wrapped up. Of all the perplexing grounds he has taken, none is so perplexing to my apprehension as those laid down in the pages to which I have referred. For the predominance of the idea of *Sacrifice* in regard to Christ's work, apart from the associations of immediate context and the like, let me refer, among many instances, to John i. 29, John xvii. 19, Rev. v. 6.

might be fairly regarded as the expression of such an idea, it would not follow that we had got in this the large and full notion of sacrifice itself. I will refer to two definitions given by high authorities, which show how far wider a view may be taken. St. Augustine tells that every work is a true sacrifice, which, looking at God as the end of all good, is done in order that we may cleave to Him in holy fellowship.* St. Thomas Aquinas, that a sacrifice is something done to the honor due to God, and with a view to propitiating Him. And Christ's work he pronounces to be a true sacrifice, because, eminently proceeding from love, it is eminently acceptable to God.† In truth, when we look at the whole genus, of which burnt-offerings, sin-offerings, thank-offerings, are the several species, we are forced to regard the generic idea as that of offering and making over a gift to the unseen object of prayer and worship. ‡ The nature of the gift would of course vary in each

* "Verum Sacrificium est omne opus quod agitur ut sancta societate inhæreamus Deo, relatum scilicet ad illum finem boni quo veraciter beati esse possimus." — *Aug. de Civ. Dei*, x. 6.

† "Sacrificium proprie dicitur: aliquod factum in honorem proprie Deo debitum ad eum placandum. Et inde est quod Augustinus dicit, *verum Sacrificium est*, &c. Christus autem, ut ibidem subditur seipsum obtulit in passione pro nobis. Et hoc ipsum opus, quod voluntarie passionem sustinuit, Deo maxime acceptum fuit, utpote ex charitate maxime proveniens: unde manifestum est, quod passio Christi fuerit verum sacrificium."— *Aquin. Summ.* iii. qu. 48.

‡ The two generic terms of the Old Testament are Mincha and Corban. Of these the former, which Gesenius considers to mean a *gift* or *present*, was indeed restricted in after-times to a particular sacrifice, the meat-offering; but it is used in Gen. iv. for the sacrifice both of Cain and Abel. The New Testament teaches the merely English reader the meaning of the latter.

species with the thoughts wherewith each species was severally connected. The details of transaction in a sin-offering would naturally bear a reference to sin, its shame, its woe, and its death. The idea of a transfer of the sin of the offerer from himself to the victim might occur naturally enough, and that in a rite of which the general application to Christ's death is so obvious that we cannot help making it, without perhaps being therefore warranted in applying that particular idea. Still, I say, the general idea of sacrifice is that of a gift, of surrendering up to another's possession that which was outwardly at least in our own. Surely we read of many sacrifices in which we find no place for the notion of substitutive punishment. Abraham's surrender of Isaac is an intelligible expression of his faith in, and his worship of, God; but none surely suppose that he thought Isaac was to bear the penalty of his sin, and thereby discharge him from that penalty. Yet this is one of the supremely typical sacrifices. The Paschal Lamb — another supremely typical sacrifice — is hardly set forth as sustaining a penalty due by the children of Israel. Even in heathendom, the gift, the symbolical meal, and the accompanying acts of honor and homage, imaginarily presented to the Deity, are surely the governing thoughts.

Εἴ ποτέ τοι χαρίεντ' ἐπὶ νήον ἔρεψα,
Ἢ εἴ δή ποτέ τοι κατὰ πίονα μήρι' ἔκηα
Ταύρων ἠδ' αἰγῶν*

* "If I e'er adorned
Thy beauteous Fane, or on Thy altar burned
The fat acceptable of bulls or goats."
COWPER.

is the appeal of the ἀρητῆρ. In Scripture the pleasure or displeasure of God in that which is presented to Him, its having any use or value in His sight, or its having none, are surely the great lights in which sacrifice is regarded. "I will not reprove thee because of thy sacrifices, or for thy burnt-offerings: because they were not always before Me. I will take no bullock out of thine house, nor he-goat out of thy folds. For all the beasts of the forest are Mine, and so are the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls upon the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are in My sight. *If I be hungry*, I will not tell thee: for the whole world is Mine, and all that is therein. *Thinkest thou that I will eat bullocks' flesh, and drink the blood of goats? Offer unto God thanksgiving.*" Here we have the Divine standard of sacrifice; but no thought of a punishment mixing itself therewith.

And had punishment been the governing idea of sacrifice, could it have happened that nearly every expansion of the term from the limits of a material rite should be expressive of the notion of gift to God, not at all of penalty borne at the hands of God, the sacrifice of praise, the sacrifice of thanksgiving, the sacrifice of righteousness, spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, the presenting our bodies a living sacrifice? These figures, as many will call them, though I doubt the propriety of doing so, are abundant, constantly recurring, most natural, if gift to God be the main and governing meaning of sacrifice, of that which was realized and fulfilled in the great and true sacrifice, —

most unnatural, and to my mind incomprehensible, if it be not.

But gift to God! What is, what can be a gift to Him! That which we can buy with our gold, that which we can seize with our hands, that which we can bring to an altar, that which we can solemnly offer there, is surely no gift to Him. Even to a heathen deity I suppose it was felt that such could be no gifts; that they could only pass for such by a strong effort of the symbolizing imagination. And much more must the same have been felt when the object of worship was the Unseen Jehovah. And yet the symbolization was necessary, unavoidable. As the bended knee to the energy of prayer, so were the material gift and its oblation to that surrender of the worshipper to the infinitely holy Will that he worshipped, which *is* sacrifice. But it is a sacrifice which man fails to render. At last comes One in whom the matter of the oblation and the form are united; Whose gift is the inward essential sacrifice; Who said, Lo! I come to do Thy Will. And He does it perfectly. The gift of His own Will and of His own Being to the Will of His Father is entire and flawless. There is no point at which the offerer pauses. The self-surrender stays not till the very life has been offered. The obedience is carried on until it becomes an obedience unto death. Short of that point, the sacrifice would not have been complete; there would have been something kept back. But all is complete; nothing is kept back; all faith in and all love to the Eternal Father, all sympathy with the brethren, receive their full expres-

sion in the sacrifice which began with the utterance, *Lo! I come!* and was consummated when Jesus bowed His head and gave up the ghost. In gazing on that, we are gazing on the Only Gift ever offered to God which, for its own sake, God could regard with complacency; in which, for its own sake, God could take delight.

And we may see how the union of Christ with His brethren renders this gift propitiatory in its effects upon them. For it is human nature which He has offered up in spotless sacrifice to the Father; the whole race is represented in Him. He is the Head and the Root of all mankind. Therefore, mankind now stands accepted before God, and every sharer in the kind may at once plead and occupy the righteous position which has been won for it by the accepted sacrifice of its great Representative.

Who will deny this? Not any one, let me be ever so sure that what I have said is the Truth, who has merely another way of stating it than mine, who does not feel free at once to adopt mine, who may say that he does not at present understand mine. For I attach no other value to what I have been saying than as it may help to disentangle from encumbering accidents a Truth on which I know that thousands on thousands are living far more than I have succeeded in doing. Who then is a denier of the Atonement? None, I am persuaded, who recognize in Jesus Christ at once the Son of God and the Son of Man, at once their Lord and their Brother, at once the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and the lowly, rejected Man, who humbled Himself even

to the death of the Cross on our behalf. I do not believe that it is easy for any man, who at all brings home to himself what God is, and what he is, and what Christ is, to be a denier of the Atonement. I do not believe it is possible for any man to form in this stage of his being, to arrive at, an adequate notion of the Atonement. But I believe that a man gives himself no security against the former case, that of practically and virtually denying it, and gives himself no advantage in the way of approximating to the latter, and gaining a just notion of it, by rashly committing himself to any one theory of it, and by greedily anathematizing such as, from whatever cause, stumble at that theory. I certainly do not feel securer against a practical, perhaps an altogether overt, denial of the central truth of the Atonement, if I turn a deaf ear to all difficulties, however reverently and diffidently brought forward, in connection with the Divine justice. In this case there seems greater danger for me than for the urger of such difficulties, seeing that the glory of the Cross of Christ according to St. Paul consists very mainly in its being the great manifestation of the righteousness of God. If it does not manifest this to any man, if it is not a display to him of justice, of that which he would recognize as justice anywhere else, he has in some way failed to see it in its true light. If it is in my statements, not in his own unaided view of it, that he thus misses the manifestation of justice, I had better abstain from urging such statements upon him.

Let it be observed that I am not prepared to condemn

every theory of the Atonement, which I have here represented as but accidentally connected with the central truth, and as neither imposed on me by the necessity for my own sake of beholding that central truth, nor by any creed or confession to which I have bound myself. I am satisfied with the liberty which I claim, and have no wish to deprive others of the like. While the real truth of his redemption by the blood of Christ is represented to a man by a theory of satisfaction, whether that of Anselm, or of the modern Calvinist, it will be with that real truth that he is fed; with the theory not at all, if the theory be wrong. I have not said so much as that either Anselm's or any other person's theories are altogether wrong. But I own they do not greatly commend themselves to me; and I rejoice at once in not feeling bound by them, and in seeing a truth which I am sure is independent of them.

But am I not bound by them? Has not every clergyman of the English Church signed a declaration that "the offering of Christ once made is that perfect Redemption, propitiation, and *satisfaction*, for all the sins of the whole world"? Art. xxxi. And every time he celebrates the Eucharist, does he not proclaim that Christ made a "*satisfaction* for the sins of the whole world"? Undoubtedly: and we may go further, and with every probability allege that the word *satisfaction* occurs in these places, because it had become, since Anselm, a term of art in the Western Church. But surely the mere use of it does not bind me to every notion that Anselm associated with it, and still less to

every notion that later schoolmen have fastened on it. It is enough, surely, that I can use the term as expressive of a great truth. Christ's sacrifice of Himself was indeed a satisfaction to Divine justice, and that in a far higher sense than is furnished by any mere notions of paying a debt, or enduring a penalty. The Righteousness of God has an entire satisfaction in the work of Christ Jesus. The Supreme Reason, the Perfect Mind of the Father, sees there that on which He can pour forth a full tide of complacency and approval. There were barriers which the Divine justice no doubt placed between God and sinful man; for perfect justice can never be on terms with sin; can never call things other than what they are; can adopt no legal fiction in order to treat the sinner as if he were not a sinner. Those barriers are broken down by Christ's sacrifice. Man is thereby brought to God.* God's justice sees Man presented to Him, such as He designed Man to be, and is satisfied. The sin of the world is taken away, and all who will avail themselves of it can occupy a position in which Man is righteous, and may serve God in holiness and righteousness, without fear.

To sum up what I have wished to enforce. The Atonement, the reconciliation of earth and heaven, of God and Man, the redemption of man through Christ, is what is denied, I am sure, by no man who worships Christ as his God, and reposes on Him as his Elder Brother. Every such man, in so far as he is awake and earnest, traces every good thing he has to the work and

* 1 Pet. iii. 18.

the intercession of his great High Priest. But many such men may fail of reconciling themselves to the theory of vicarious punishment, may find that to them it in no way manifests the righteousness of God, may be unable to see anything in Scripture which warrants the theory. And yet such people may read the declarations: "Surely He hath borne our afflictions, and carried our sorrows," "He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities," "He bore our sins in His own body on the tree," and see and confess their complete fulfilment in the thorn-crowned head, and the arms outstretched on the cross. For we *see* the facts there that Christ did bear the burden of our sin and shame and woe, however determinedly we set our faces against theories of the process whereby He bore them, — whether of vicarious punishment, or any other. Certainly the mere words compel us to no such theories: —

> "Sinful Macduff,
> They were all struck for thee, naught that I am,
> Not for their own demerits, but for mine," —

are most natural words, and full of real meaning in the tremendous situation wherein they are placed in the utterer's mouth. And nobody, I suppose, for an instant thinks that a vicarious theory — a theory of substitution — is either required by them, or would enhance their meaning. And even so I may venture to say that the most resolute decliner of such theories in regard to the Work of Christ for our redemption, may use the language of Isaiah liii., and all that other language of Scripture which so corresponds with it, in sincerity, as

expressing what all inadequately he feels and sees when he tries to contemplate the agony of the garden and the darkness of Calvary. He can see and accept the fact, while he declines all theory respecting it.*

But one truth respecting it I would not call theory, and I have tried to set it forth as inmost and central. Whatever else was Christ's work on our behalf, it was and is sacrifice. It was and it is the sacrifice which alone is intrinsically acceptable to the supreme reason and everlasting justice of the Father; the sacrifice which binds together and quickens all imperfect sacrifices, services, and efforts after obedience, that have had any truth or meaning, — the sacrifice in which those who were alienated and at a distance, the all-holy and the sinful, meet together and are at one. It is the mighty cloud of incense, which, rising from out of moral and spiritual history, makes that history fragrant and acceptable. And this cloud descended before it arose. It came down from the ethereal region to which it mounts. It is accepted by the Father, because it is the perfect doing of the Father's will, the perfect manifestation of the Father's mind.

* Of course such an one will admit, because he sees it, that the Lord's Passion has a very intimate connection with sin, — the sin of human kind. It was, we may say, I hope without presumptuous theorizing, a humble, filial acquiescence in, and acceptance of, the position into which sin had brought the brotherhood of man. Otherwise, it would not have been man's sacrifice. I must refer my readers to Mr. Campbell's reasonings on this point in his profound book on the Atonement, a book which, if I shall succeed in persuading a single earnest man or woman to read, study, and inwardly digest, I shall not have written in vain.

There is profound truth in the following quotation, of which I should be sorry that all our dislike of the polemical aims and efforts of its author should rob us.

"'But,' pursued Fabiola, almost timidly, 'is there no great act of acknowledgment, such as sacrifice is supposed to be, whereby He may be formally recognized and addressed?'

"Syra answered in the affirmative.

* * * * * *

"'And could not I,' still more humbly asked her mistress, 'be so far instructed in your school as to perform this sublime act of homage?'

"'I fear not, noble Fabiola; one must needs obtain a victim worthy of the Deity.'

"'Ah! yes, to be sure,' answered Fabiola; 'a bull may be good enough for Jupiter, or a goat for Bacchus, but where can be found a sacrifice worthy of Him whom you have brought me to know?'

"'It must, indeed, be one in every way worthy of Him, spotless in purity, matchless in greatness, unbounded in acceptableness.'

"'And what can that be, Syra?'

"'Only Himself.'"

Fabiola, or the Church of the Catacombs.

COMMENTS BY ANOTHER CLERGYMAN.

I.

I AM very thankful to the writer of this Essay for his warnings respecting the injustice we may do to other men and to ourselves if we substitute theories of the Atonement for the actual good news of it, which we find in the preaching and letters of the Apostles. No lesson is more necessary for us all; that we may not contract God's Truth by our conceptions of it; that we may not change it from a living power into a dead notion; that we may not rob our brethren of sides of it which they have perceived, and which we have not perceived; that we may not compel them to accept what they have not perceived.

I am afraid, however, that the writer may leave an impression on the minds of some of his readers which will hinder them from entering into his purpose. They may fancy that he wishes them to discard the thoughts which are suggested by what he calls the pre-Anselmite theory, by what he styles the Anselmite theory, by what he describes as the more modern theory, by that which he discovers in Coleridge. All of these are, I confess, very inadequate; each taken by itself will be merely the contradiction of some other; each may interfere with that great principle of Sacrifice for which the writer of the Essay demands, and I think most rightly, the central place. But each may indicate some as-

pect of that all-embracing verity, which is above us, and yet in which we live; which none of us can speak of except most feebly and imperfectly, but which we must, nevertheless, make the main subject of our preaching.

1. I cannot abandon so readily as the writer seems to do, that doctrine respecting the Redemption from the Evil Spirit, which he says was overthrown by Anselm. In the form which it took when it spoke of a justice due to Satan, I may consider that it is disposed of triumphantly in the dialogue "*Cur Deus Homo*," though even in that form it was revived after the Reformation, and is set forth with great vigor in a popular sermon by Bishop Hooper. I think that Anselm treats it with great modesty and caution, evidently discontented with it so far as it assumed that the Devil had any claim of right upon man or God, but yet discerning so much practical reality in it that he left the objection to be raised by the person in the dialogue, who does not represent the teacher but the disciple.

To myself this belief of a Redemption out of the hands of a usurper, has been one of quite unspeakable comfort. I know that I have been ready to use the very language, in hours of conflict and oppression, which appears so unreasonable. "Tyrant! thou hast been paid thy full price. Thou hast had better blood than mine since thou desiredst it. Thou hast no right over me." And though I should never dream of turning such a personal argument into the explanation of a universal truth, I can sympathize very thoroughly with brave and earnest men like Hooper, who presented to

men struggling like themselves a message which they would understand, however little scholastic value it may have. And though I would never speak of Christ's blood as Redemption money paid to the Devil, I do maintain that a deliverance of men, by their true Father, from an evil power who had claimed them as his subjects, underlies all the lessons concerning Redemption in the Bible, and explains the passage in St. Peter, and a thousand others, which, as the writer of the Essay truly says, startle the modern reader. Any idea of Redemption but that which imports that it is the purchase of a creature out of bondage by a Creator who cares that it should be free, seems to me feeble, self-contradictory, unpractical. Holding that belief, I maintain that the word Redemption points to the greatest of all divine and human realities, and is not, as Coleridge seemed to think, a metaphor drawn from earthly transactions; this Redemption could only have been effected by the death, burial, and descent into hell, of the Son of God.

2. But I do not mean that Redemption is the only word which has to do with Atonement, or that, if the meaning of Redemption were fully set forth, the meaning of Atonement would be fully set forth. The word *Satisfaction* is as much involved in that meaning as the one of which I have been speaking. And it is on *this* word that Anselm designed to throw light, and was able to throw light. Living in an organized Christendom, he did not understand the import of Redemption as clearly as those who had seen men enslaved to false

gods. Living in a cloister, he did not understand the meaning of Redemption so well as preachers addressing men who were sunk in lusts and baseness. But the idea of righteousness and of a righteous God was brought more distinctly and fully to his mind by the controversies of his time, than it was to most of the fathers, than it is to most men who are thinking of the power by which they can act upon masses of corrupt people. It was this righteous God, he felt, not the unrighteous devil, who requires satisfaction. Nothing but a perfect obedience — an obedience unto death — can satisfy Him. The writer of the Essay will be supported by the judgment of all thoughtful readers of Anselm, in the opinion that justice, in his mind, meant something altogether different from the demand for punishment. The very title and subject of the treatise are (as the Essay notices) decisive that the union of perfect manhood with the perfect Godhead was essential to his idea of Satisfaction. But I cannot say that Anselm did not absorb the doctrine of Redemption and all other aspects of the Atonement into this one thought of satisfaction, and that in this way he did not unwittingly give a sanction to conceptions of it which were foreign in many respects to his own.

The Germans, with their habits of mind, and their fondness for histories of dogmas, naturally give a prominence and emphasis to Anselm's doctrine, which it has not for us. They are probably right that he presented the truth in a scholastical shape which it had not assumed previously; for Anselm is, in some sense,

the beginner of the scholastical period. Moreover, this idea of satisfaction is more capable of being cast in that mould than any other, though it is liable to suffer, like every living truth, from the compression of a formula. But it is a mistake to forget how vehemently and angrily the bonds of scholasticism have been shaken off in any great Church movements; and how specially strong and passionate the preaching of the Atonement has been during such movements. How idle would it be to look for any statement of it in Anselm's terms by the Franciscans, by Wiclif, by Luther, by the Evangelical teachers in England during the last century?

3. To speak specially of these last. It is not correct to fasten upon them any special theory of the Atonement. They spoke to the hearts of their hearers. They spoke to their conscience of sin. They set forth the Lamb of God who taketh away sin. They dwelt, as the writer of this paper has remarked, upon all those expressions which point to the bearing of sin, to the endurance of the chastisement for sin. They could not doubt — they had the strongest internal assurance — that these passages expressed the divinest, the most life-giving truth. By degrees it became to them the one idea of Atonement. The thoughts of redemption, of satisfaction, were merged in it and determined by it. Still they made no attempt, or very irregular attempts, to determine *how* those thoughts could be subordinated to this. Their divinity was experimental, not logical or dogmatical.

It was opposed by the Unitarian and semi-Unitarian

Schools. Arguments must be found to sustain it. Men who had none of their strong Evangelical convictions, but more of learning and dialectical skill than these teachers possessed, came to their help. Their belief was put for them into a convenient mould. The most serious of them — whose belief was their life — stared when they saw the transformation. It was clearly not *this* which had sustained them in the fight with the world and the flesh and the Devil. But they accepted the theory which explained the bearing of sins into the endurance of a certain punishment for sins, as good for controversy, however unsatisfactory it was to their inner life, however ineffectual for practice. They saw that their faith had first been diluted, then crystallized. But perhaps their opponents could only understand it in that form. What use was there in speaking to *them* about that which concerned spiritual experience?

4. The Evangelical doctrine of the Atonement, thus reduced and thus hardened by Dr. Magee, was that which caused such pain to Coleridge. He had embraced, with his whole heart, the doctrine that a regeneration of the heart and will is the great principle and end of the Gospel. The utter want of any recognition of such a regeneration — of any power to produce it — in the Unitarian creed, had been one of his principal reasons for casting it off. He protested, with a fervor not less than was displayed by any of the Evangelical divines, against what seemed to him the destruction of this truth by Dr. Mant, and those who identified regeneration with baptism. How, he asked, can the regeneration they

speak of import a moral or spiritual renovation? Upon the same ground precisely he objected to Dr. Magee's doctrine of the Atonement. The Scriptures, it appeared to him, testified of a turning from darkness to light, of a resurrection out of evil. Did not the notion of a mere artificial substitution interfere with these blessed announcements? Did it not confuse all our sense of personal responsibility? Did it not introduce a fiction where the conscience most demands reality?

These statements have produced a great effect upon students of theology, especially upon those who had felt the power of the Evangelical teachings, and could not be content to see it swamped in any teaching which was not vital and personal. Some they have led to think that the words in our Baptismal Service and our Catechism must be untrue; some they have led to suspect all the expressions respecting the sufferings of Christ for us, which were the most dear to their forefathers. But there are others who have to thank Coleridge for awakening them to study the full force of these expressions, as well as of those in the Baptismal Service, which scandalized him no less than the instruments of the religious revival in the last age. They have found in the doctrine, *God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them*, the fullest assurance of that transcendent fact of which Coleridge speaks; that fact which cannot be set forth in any terms of logic, but which commends itself to the consciences of human beings as the very ground of a spiritual economy, of an actual fellowship for human beings. They have seen in

this message that redemption of mankind of which the Catechism speaks. They have seen in it the full justification of all the assertions that Christ bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that by His stripes we are healed, in the living sense which the Evangelical teachers gave to them, not in the withered formal sense which Dr. Magee's theory gives to them. Nay, they even believe that a still deeper, more full sense than the Evangelical teachers saw in them — though including and sustaining that — was attached to these words by the Apostles and Evangelists from whom they at first proceeded. And accepting in *this* sense the declaration of the Catechism respecting the Redemption of all mankind, they can find a full justification of those words in the same Catechism which claim for every baptized child the right of a child of God and a member of Christ.

The result to which these observations lead me are this. We cannot afford to lose any of these aspects of this great truth, which at times we are inclined to cast aside as the theories of another time, or of an imperfect illumination. They are needful to us as correctors of each other, as well as for the necessities of human beings. The first of which the Essayist speaks is a witness against the terrible imagination which so often haunts our carnal nature, that Christ has redeemed us out of his Father's hands, not out of the Devil's hands. The second is a witness against the notion that anything can satisfy God but a perfection, a holiness, a love which is the image of His own, that which he sees in the only-begotten Son. The third is a witness against the notion

that anything short of an actual endurance of human sorrow, an actual endurance of human evil by the Son of God, can content creatures who are conscious of guilt, or can relieve them from the burden of it. The fourth is a witness against all attempts to resolve the union of Christ with men and with God into artificial arrangements, and against the notion that the act of reconciliation can be anything less than a divine and transcendent act.

On that last point I would dwell for a moment before I conclude. The writer of the Tract says, I think very truly, that Coleridge loses sight of the idea of Sacrifice, and that by doing so he makes the Atonement less of a revealed mystery than the Apostles and the Church teach us that it is. But in his hint that it is divine and transcendent lies, if I am not mistaken, the correction of Coleridge's failure in both respects. I adopt all that the Essayist says of Sacrifice so far as the human offerer is concerned. But I cannot read such words as these, *He gave up His Son for us all*, illustrated as they are by the whole New Testament, and by all the prayers and collects of the Church, without feeling the Sacrifice must have a deeper ground than any acts or services of ours. We can only be doing right acts when we are conformed to the image of God. He who is the perfect image of God is the perfect Sacrifice. What is not involved in this belief? A truth past our finding out, but which is yet the ground of all human morality, of all human hopes. Every prayer supposes it; every humble man confesses it. But what a depth it opens to us! One which only

the Eucharist, presenting to us a sacrifice which proceeded from the love of the Father, which was perfectly accomplished in the Son, which is realized in the Church and its members by the Divine Spirit, can set forth fully, practically, for all ages. That has been the witness to Christendom for an atonement by a living, all-embracing Sacrifice. The thoughts of all different teachers are interpreted by it, sustained by it, purified by it, converted by it into nourishment for the flock of Christ. The Eucharist teaches us what the sin is of fighting for the purpose of stifling or contradicting the thoughts and apprehensions which God may Himself have imparted to men respecting His truth. The Eucharist teaches us the duty of fighting with Christ's own weapons, that His name may not be slandered, His sacrifice denied, His body rent asunder, while we are busy in defending our opinions, and confounding our opponents.

POSTSCRIPT.

Since this tract was written, a letter has appeared in the *Times* newspaper, signed by the Principal of King's College, which bears very directly upon the subject of it. In his pamphlet on the "Essays and Reviews," Dr. Jelf had used the words *pacifying of God's wrath*, as if they were taken from one of our Articles and had been adopted by the compilers of them as the proper translation of the word *Propitiatio*. The writer of the paper on the "Essays" in the last *Edinburgh Review*, whilst fully acquitting Dr. Jelf of any dishonest intention, neverthe-

less charged him with rashly interpolating a phrase into the Articles which did not appear in them. The defence, as far as the Principal of King's College is concerned, is perfectly satisfactory, and has satisfied the Reviewer. The articles of 1562 do contain the phrase, though the Articles of 1571 do not. It *is* introduced, as a translation of the word *Propitiatio*. Dr. Jelf was convinced long ago, by Dr. Cardwell, that the text of 1562 is better than the text of 1571, and was, in fact, authorized by Act of Parliament. After such a statement, every right-minded man will hold Dr. Jelf to be absolved from all imputation of wilful, or even of rash, interpolation.

But other questions, far more important to the Church than the personal one, arise out of this discussion. Dr. Jelf thinks that the phrase *pacifying of God's wrath* is an exact equivalent to the word *Propitiation*. He has an undoubted right to think so. But thus much is certain.

1. That in the later recension of the Articles, that which — whether the best or not in the judgment of antiquaries — is the one to which every clergyman subscribes at his ordination, and which he reads to his congregation after he has received a benefice, the only one which contains thirty nine articles (the twenty-ninth being omitted in that which Dr. Jelf approves), the phrase *pacifying of God's wrath* was deliberately abandoned, and the word "Propitiation" deliberately exchanged for it.

2. That this was done, although the phrase which Dr. Jelf considers the perfect equivalent for *Propitiatio*

had been used in the book of Edward VI., as well as in the Articles of 1562, and although the compilers exposed themselves to the charge of merely anglicizing a Latin termination, instead of giving a convenient and popular explanation of a word which would be used in popular sermons.

These two facts we can now affirm on the authority of the Principal of King's College. We have not his help in ascertaining the *reason* which may have led the compilers of the Articles to adopt such an alteration; if we had, both he and those who approve the alteration might be very wide of the mark. To imagine reasons for men who lived three centuries ago is difficult work. But as the Articles are surely intended to assist preachers of the Gospel in delivering their message to the people, and as the substance of that message must be taken from the Bible, some English clergymen may discover a reason of thankfulness *on their own behalf*, that they are not obliged by the Articles they have subscribed to put "the pacifying of God's wrath," for propitiation, in the two passages of the New Testament in which our version adopts that word as the rendering of ἱλαστήριον or ἱλασμός.

Let us try the first of these: Romans c. iii. v. 4. *Whom God hath set forth to be a pacifying of His wrath, through faith in his blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past through the forbearance of God.*

Let us try the second: John c. ii. vv. 1 and 2. *My little children, these things I write unto you that ye sin*

not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He is the pacifying (let it be pacifier if it is thought better) *of God's wrath for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world.*

I repeat what I said before. Every one who pleases *may* accept this as the exact meaning of these texts. But is it very strange that the compilers of the Articles should not have wished to force the ministers of Christ's word and sacraments to accept for themselves, and to give to their flocks, such a paraphrase of the language of the two Apostles? Is it very strange that a minister of the Gospel should say now, as one of them does say from his inmost heart and soul, —

"I believe I should cheat my people of the message of reconciliation which God has sent me to deliver to them; I believe I should confuse their minds about His nature and purposes to them; I believe I should not represent the Son as the express image of the Father, — if I compelled the Divine words to undergo this violence. The words, pacifying of God's wrath, may convey the best and most blessed meaning to some minds. I would deprive no one of that meaning. But I must preach God's gospel to sinners; and to me, and from my lips, this would be no gospel at all."

IV.

THE SIGNS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN:

AN APPEAL TO SCRIPTURE ON THE QUESTION OF MIRACLES.

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IV.

THE SIGNS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN:

AN APPEAL TO SCRIPTURE ON THE QUESTION OF MIRACLES.

A READER who takes up a discourse upon such a subject as miracles, will reasonably desire to be informed at once as to the position and purpose of the writer. He will wish to know whether he is invited to read another attack on miracles, or another defence of them against attacks. In the following pages, treating of the great signs of the Gospel, the reader will certainly find no attack upon miracles, for I desire to justify to the utmost the narratives of the New Testament, as historical and authentic, against the doubts which have been cast upon them; but I also propose to contrast the miracle-worship which pervades so many modern defences of Christianity with that view of the acts called miraculous which the New Testament itself would suggest.

Miracle-worship betrays itself in the assertion of the following principles. It sets forth violations, or suspensions, of the laws of nature, as the ultimate grounds of our belief in a Divine Lord and Saviour of men. It

magnifies such violations or suspensions as more Divine than the laws of nature themselves, until it is in danger of forgetting that the laws are Divine at all. And it demands of men a faith in miracles, thus interpreted, almost more imperatively than it demands a faith in Him who wrought them. The metaphysical definition of a miracle is abstracted from the wonderful works of the Lord Jesus and His followers, and is set up as an object to which all Christians are to do homage.

The prevailing tendency of religious belief for some generations in England has been in favor of the theory which makes miracles the great evidences of Christianity. Every statement of that theory will probably contain a great deal of truth; but it is scarcely possible to maintain it without displacing the Gospel miracles from their right relation to the whole work of Christ and to the minds of men. In a season of panic it is natural that the traditions of the day should be expressed with vehemence and exaggeration. At the present time we are in danger of having modern notions on many subjects thrust hastily upon us, as parts of the necessary belief of every Christian man; and those who desire to be loyal to the Scriptures and to the Church of their fathers, as well as to the truth, must beware how they accept the controversial dogmas of those who are chiefly bent upon crushing an enemy. The strongest things which can be said by popular teachers in opposition to Professor Baden Powell's Essay are not likely to be the truest concerning miracles. I believe, on the contrary, that it is impossible to meet the really dangerous

part of that Essay without doing justice to much in it that is not only reasonable but Scriptural. It is not, however, the object of this paper to review Professor Powell's Essay, but mainly to ask for a fair consideration of the Gospel miracles as they are presented to us in the New Testament itself.

It ought not to surprise us as an unreasonable demand, on the part of the inquiring spirit of our time, that we should *justify*, if we can, the miraculous narratives of the Bible. If those narratives are to appeal to minds interested in the knowledge and the practical life of the present day, as conveying simple historical truth, it seems inevitable that anything in them which implies a suspension of the laws of nature should excite a feeling partaking more of repugnance than of admiration. There is nothing, indeed, in the scientific or the historical studies by which our age is distinguished, to hinder a cordial reception of *wonders* into the domain of belief. The patient investigations of students are rewarded every day by the discovery of new facts, no less wonderful and unexpected to the philosopher than to ordinary men. But that which is more wonderful to intelligent men than any isolated fact, is the *harmony* which is found to prevail in all the departments of the universe. Wherever knowledge increases, there interdependence between fact and fact, analogies between different processes, subordination of parts to a whole, are seen to testify of a marvellous living order. If a student comes upon any fact or occurrence which seems to imply a contradiction of an established law, he immediately recognizes in it a

sign of his own ignorance, a hopeful hint of an enlarged knowledge upon whose track he has set his foot. A conceited unscientific mind would be tempted to reject the fair evidence of a fact for which it could not account by laws already understood: but the humble and docile spirit of the true inquirer is always ready to investigate what he cannot explain; always sure that, when the truth is ascertained, it will be found to reveal, not a violation, but a more subtle fulfilment, of order. To such a mind nothing is so distasteful as the vaunting of supernatural prodigies. At whatever risk, the vast majority of educated persons do not hesitate to set down as a fool or as an impostor any one who presents himself with claims to supernatural powers. If there are any reports which we do not think worth attending to, they are reports of modern miracles. An unknown teacher, professing to bring a revelation from heaven and to substantiate it by breaking the laws of nature, would be as certain to excite the contempt, antecedent to investigation, of Professor Mansel or the Bishop of Oxford, as of Professor Faraday or Mr. Mill. But why, then, should the present, it may be asked, be separated from the past? Why is reverence for a Divine order to govern our thoughts concerning things about us, and to be cast off when we approach the facts of a former age? "Why should I be compelled," a philosopher may naturally plead, "to receive, as the proper and ultimate credentials of a Revelation of truth given eighteen centuries ago, things which in the nineteenth century we should all agree to regard with suspicion and dislike, and which would be

at least a discredit and hindrance to any truths which they were meant to recommend?" Such considerations oblige us in candor to admit that the miracles of the Bible require to be explained and justified. It is a mere matter of fact, that "suspensions of the order of nature," instead of compelling men to believe something which they would otherwise refuse to believe, are a preliminary difficulty of belief. All discussions concerning miracles, to be of any use, must be adjusted to this state of things.

Now the only hope for the Scriptural narratives is that they will *justify themselves.* They will gain little help from considerations which go round and round them, or from ingenious arguments set in array against general objections. Controversialists on both sides, taking their cue from the language of their opponents, may be drawn farther and farther from the real matter about which the dispute has arisen. Let us pass by, therefore, the metaphysical controversies which have enveloped the question of miracles, and let us endeavor to see what, according to the book itself, the Gospel miracles really are.

It would be a great advantage if we could get rid of the term miracle altogether. It carries with it some arbitrary definition — some "conception of a miracle" — which is foreign to the ideas of the New Testament. And the word is not wanted. In a great majority of the places in which we have "miracles" in our version, we ought to replace it by "signs." The word itself is exactly equivalent to "wonders." Signs, wonders, and

powers are what we have to do with in the New Testament.

We read there, that a teacher appeared in Judæa more than eighteen centuries ago, who announced the near advent of the Kingdom of Heaven. He declared that One was coming, whose appearing would be the manifestation of the Kingdom of Heaven, because He was always and everywhere the heavenly light and life of all men. He called upon men to repent of their ungodliness and to turn to God; and gave them in God's name a baptism of forgiveness and purification. His announcement made a wide and lasting impression on the Jewish mind. To him "went out Jerusalem and all Judæa, and all the region round about Jordan." But this herald of the Kingdom of Heaven, it is recorded, "*did no sign*," (*Ἰωάννης σημεῖον ἐποίησεν οὐδέν*, St. John x. 41.)

In a short time, according to the Gospel histories, the Baptist was able to point out to his followers a fellow-countryman in whom his announcements were fulfilled. Gradually, almost stealthily, the heavenly nature and mission of Jesus of Nazareth began to be declared to the people. He himself adopted the saying of John as His own first declaration, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." He caused the disciples whom John transferred to him to carry on for a time the same baptism. He spoke of the near fulfilment of the glorious hopes which sounded through the pages of the Hebrew prophets. He endeavored to awaken in the minds of his fellow-countrymen a belief that the God of their fathers

was about to manifest Himself, according to the covenant, in acts of deliverance and blessing. He uttered, in all places, and to all persons, the name of the Heavenly Father, "My Father and yours." Thus putting forward the names of the Kingdom of Heaven, as coming upon the earth and in that land of Judæa, and of the Father in Heaven who had spoken by the prophets, He began to do works also. At seasons and places and in degrees regulated by no fixed mechanical rule, but by an inward sense of what was expedient, Jesus began "to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease." "Preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease amongst the people,"— this is the account of the greater part of the works of Jesus of Nazareth. Generally, seeing such works, the multitude would glorify God, who had given such power to men. If they began to catch at this power, and to offer themselves as adherents of Him who wielded it, its manifestations were immediately withdrawn from them. These powers of healing — which in some rare instances went so far as to recall the dead into life — were only put forth in the sight of those who had faith, that is to say, of those whose spirits were in some degree opened to the Kingdom of Heaven and the name of the Father. They had always the closest reference to the unveiling of the Kingdom of God amongst men.

Besides these works of healing, applied to the whole nature of man, others of a similar purpose are recorded as having been wrought by Jesus. Such are the increasing of a few loaves and fishes so as to feed a large

and hungry multitude; the changing of water into wine to support the festivities of a marriage entertainment; and the bringing of a heavy draught of fish into the nets of His disciples. Next to these we may place such manifestations as the stilling of the winds and waves, and the walking upon the water, by which Jesus nourished the trust of His disciples both in God and in Himself.

The fact that Jesus was born of Mary whilst she was yet a virgin, does not appear to have been publicly stated, if we may judge from the silence of the Gospels, whilst He was yet in the flesh upon the earth. But after He had died upon the Cross, He returned within three days alive to His disciples, having taken up His dead body from the grave, and transfigured it into a form which at His will He made visible and palpable to men still in the flesh. His appearances after the Resurrection were carefully limited to friends and brethren: and of these, no one actually saw the body of Jesus rising from the grave. At one of his appearances, after giving instructions concerning the Kingdom of God to His disciples, "He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight."

The rising again and ascension of Jesus were speedily followed by an event which His disciples had been taught by Him to expect and to wait for. The Spirit, whom Jesus had promised to send from the Father, came down to the disciples, manifesting His coming by symbols of fiery tongues and a rushing mighty wind, and by impulses to utter the praises of God in some

manner not exactly described to us. In the power of this Spirit the disciples, as they have reported to us, understood the nature of their Master, and especially of His Resurrection. They knew Him to be the Lord of life, and they therefore regarded His triumph over death as a most natural and necessary event. The Spirit created immediately a fellowship of men acknowledging Jesus to be the Lord of life and the Ruler of men, as well as the Son of the Father, and confessing themselves to be God's children, and brothers one to another, in Him. Signs and wonders immediately began to be wrought in the name of Jesus and of the Spirit. The main signs of the Kingdom, in this stage, are the same as before. When God's servants spoke His Word, He stretched forth His hand to heal. The works of healing, though the distribution of them was what, from our ignorance of the reasons of it, we should call irregular, were numerous and conspicuous. There were some exceptional acts of punishment, as the sudden deaths of Ananias and Sapphira, intended to vindicate the Divine calling and inspiration of the new society, and the temporary blindness of Elymas, intended to stamp, as dark and misleading, those magical arts to which so many minds in that age were enslaved. There were also some instances of deliverance from imprisonment granted to the leading Apostles. But the works by which Peter, and John, and Stephen, and Paul are reported to have confirmed the word which they spoke to men concerning the redemption of mankind through the death and resurrection of the

Christ, the Lord of men and Son of God, were uniformly acts of deliverance done to the bodies and souls of men. They found out or received men suffering from blindness, fever, palsy, epilepsy, mania, and made them whole through the name of Jesus. In the words of the Epistle to the Hebrews, a great salvation, which first began to be spoken by the Lord, was confirmed by those who heard him, and God bare testimony to it by signs and wonders and various powers and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His will.

Having recalled to the reader's memory, by this hasty sketch, the general character of the signs and wonders and powers recorded in the New Testament, I would ask his attention to the following more special observations.

1. The philosophical conception of a miracle, as an interference with the laws of nature, is entirely absent from the New Testament books. The works of Christ were wonderful, and such as no man could do unless God were with him, in the eyes of the disciples; but they never thought of discriminating between what was in accordance with nature, or contrary to nature, or above nature, in the works which they beheld. No line is drawn, or attempted to be drawn, in the New Testament, between works which might have been done by eminent human skill and power, and works which were necessarily superhuman. If a question had been raised as to whether any wonderful work of St. Paul was done by natural means or by supernatural, the ignorant people who surrounded him at Ephesus or in Melita would have been utterly incompetent either to

investigate or to understand the question. I am speaking now of the simple element of power, an element they undoubtedly possessed, in the "miracles" of the New Testament. The scientific idea of the supernatural, we must remember, is inferred from the scientific idea of nature; and with reference to minds ignorant of the laws of nature, to call an act supernatural is no more than to say that it transcends their experience and power of explanation. If a Faraday were to go forth, with the resources which his science gives him, to make an impression upon the imaginations of Kafirs or Arabs, he would not be able, indeed, to do the works which Jesus Christ is said to have wrought; but he would undoubtedly be able to overwhelm them with any degree of astonishment and perplexity, by doing works which they would be wholly unable to ascribe to any but a supernatural power. There is no irreverence in comparing such works, as exhibitions of power, with the wonderful acts of our Lord: for He himself mentions the works of false teachers in precisely the same terms by which His own are described. "There shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and *shall show great signs and wonders;* insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." (St. Matthew xxiv. 24.) The casting out of devils is spoken of by Jesus as a work of other Jews of His time. "If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do *your sons* cast them out? Therefore shall they be your judges." (St. Luke xi. 19.) The Scriptures then, do not contain the modern logical notion of a Revelation attested by

miracles. They represent the Son of God as naturally doing mightier works than other men did, but they do not place his acts, or any part of them, in a class called "supernatural" by themselves. They give no hint of their having been sifted by incredulous philosophers, and ascertained to be supernatural. They present no careful array of the evidence of those who witnessed them. Their language concerning the signs and wonders of the Gospel is such, that, if any one should think it worth while to maintain the hypothesis that, in some future age, through the advancing knowledge and power bestowed by the Creator upon the human race, men will be enabled without supernatural agency to do the very works which Christ did, no sentence could be quoted from Scripture to condemn it. We may have other good reasons for rejecting such a hypothesis; I only mention it for the sake of illustrating the language of the Scriptures. The tendency of the Scriptural writers is not to draw the line sharply between the natural and the supernatural, but to obliterate it. Consider, for example, the following language of St. Paul concerning spiritual gifts, in 1 Cor. xii. 8–11: "To one is given, by the Spirit, the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge, by the same Spirit; to another faith, by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing, by the same Spirit; to another the working of powers; to another prophecy; to another the discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will."

2. Whilst the philosophical and (to speak technically) *evidential* definition of miracles is thus entirely absent from the Scriptures, there is no doubt that the wonderful and powerful and divinely-wrought nature of the works of Christ and His Apostles is plainly set forth. But with reference to the effect of this "supernatural" element, the Scriptures assert a principle which has been strangely overlooked. *Any conversion or adhesion to His cause which rested rather on the impression produced by superhuman power than on the acceptance of the truth in the heart, was studiously repelled by our Lord Himself.* This most remarkable fact is illustrated, as might be expected, in St. John's Gospel more than in the other three. We learn from St. John, that the thing desired by Jesus was that His *word* should be received as the truth. He did mighty works; but they were to gain a hearing for the word, to illustrate it, to be *utterances of it.* As soon as He perceived that the works, as powers and wonders, were not ministering to the acceptance of the word by the reason and conscience and heart, they were withdrawn. The word could do without the mighty works: the works, separated from the word, ceased to be of any use, and became hurtful. The first three Gospels tell us how Jesus could do no mighty works where unbelief prevailed. They record His deliberate refusal to work signs for the gratification of his townsmen, or for the convincing of the Pharisees. (St. Matthew xii. 38, 39; xiii. 58; xvi. 1–4. St. Mark vi. 5, 6. St. Luke iv. 23, 24.)

St. John's testimony is given more explicitly.

The disciples who first attached themselves to Jesus were not persuaded to receive Him as the Messiah by a display of supernatural works. They were directed to Him by their master, the Baptist, who told them that he had seen Jesus pointed out to him by a sign from heaven, as the One greater than himself, of whom he had previously spoken to his followers; but it was through personal intercourse with Jesus Himself that they learnt to believe in Him (i. 35 – 51). After a while, He wrought His first sign to manifest His glory to these His followers; and the effect of it was a deepening of their faith (ii. 1 – 11).

When Jesus went up to the Passover, after the commencement of His ministry, He began His work by driving the traders out of the Temple. "The Jews" thereupon asked Him what sign He showed to justify such an act. His answer conveyed a refusal to work any sign. Nevertheless, at the same festival, he afterwards wrought signs which caused many to believe in His name. But Jesus "would not commit Himself unto them (οὐκ ἐπίστευεν αὐτὸν αὐτοῖς), because He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man." (St. John ii. 13 – 25.) What did He perceive in them, which caused Him not to trust Himself to them? We learn from vi. 14, 15, "Then those men, when they had seen the sign which Jesus did, said: This is of a truth the Prophet that should come into the world. When Jesus perceived, therefore, that they would come and seize upon Him, to make Him a king, He departed again

into a mountain Himself alone." An adhesion produced by mighty works was not what Jesus desired. After his repulse of the common people at that first Passover, Nicodemus, "a ruler of the Jews," came to Him, confessing that an impression had been made upon him, also, by the mighty works of Jesus. This confession is immediately met by the declaration that the Kingdom which Jesus was come to establish was a *spiritual* Kingdom, and was to be entered, not through wondering at mighty works, but by a new birth of water and of the Spirit. When Jesus had returned to the place in which His first sign had been wrought, Cana in Galilee, "a certain nobleman" came to Him, and besought Him that He would heal his son who was at the point of death. Jesus takes the opportunity to rebuke the wonder-worship, which he desired to discourage, and says emphatically, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe" (iv. 48). Once more, when the multitude asked Him for a sign, to attest (in modern phrase) the Revelation which He brought from Heaven, in the words, "What sign showest Thou, then, that we may see and believe Thee? What dost Thou work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from Heaven to eat," — Jesus gave them no sign, but spoke to them of a spiritual bread on which they might feed by believing in Him (vi. 30). After that discourse "many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with Him." Those who remained said, through the voice of Peter, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life" (vi. 68).

The words of eternal life were the mighty convincing power which brought true disciples to Jesus, and kept them near Him. Those that would not be drawn by these, Jesus would not have.

We observe, then, that the Scriptures know nothing of "a Revelation received independently of its contents, because attested by miracles." "The contents of a Revelation," is an expression very foreign to the ideas of the New Testament. But, if we are to use it, it is quite plain that Jesus distinctly condemned the temper of mind that would accept a Revelation on the strength of miracles, independently of its contents. "*If I say the truth*, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God heareth God's words; ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." "Do you want signs and wonders, that you may believe? No sign shall be given you." It was the purpose of Jesus to make the Kingdom of Heaven visible to men, and to draw them into it, and to do this by revealing the Father. Mighty works were a fitting part of His ministration, and might do much good by opening and instructing the minds of men. But such signs and wonders deserve no great honor in themselves. They might be exhibited in attestation of falsehood, and then true men should scorn them. The child of God can hear God's voice, whether it comes with mighty works or without them.

3. When the works of our Lord are mentioned in the Gospels, the term which we might accurately translate *miracles*, τέρατα, that is, wonders, is the one which is least frequently or conspicuously employed. The terms

signs, σημεῖα, and *powers*, δυνάμεις, are much more frequent. The first of these, even if we do not insist that it is always to be taken in a designedly strict sense, leads us to what all who have reverently studied the works of Christ perceive to be their most striking characteristic. They are *signs;* tokens into which the nature of the Christ and of His Kingdom is translated. This is St. John's favorite expression for the works of His Master. The earlier Evangelists speak of *powers* as being displayed by Jesus. As these Evangelists devote themselves so expressly to the recording of those acts and discourses by which the Kingdom of Heaven was manifested, we may perceive a propriety in their use of the term "powers" for the works of deliverance which accompanied the proclamation of the Kingdom. All these works were, in the strictest sense, signs of the heavenly kingdom. As any one thing may be a token or indication of another less visible thing, so the cures wrought by Jesus and His Apostles were exact tokens or indications of the spiritual powers then being exerted upon the earth. But St. John is occupied with the setting forth of those grounds, in the relations of the Son of God to the Father and to men, upon which the Kingdom of Heaven rested. And in reading his Gospel, we see manifestly that the wonderful works which he records, not only are in themselves signs of the glory of the Son of God, but are expressly interpreted by him as having that significance. This is so important an aspect of the Scriptural theory of "miracles," that I shall briefly illustrate it by three leading examples.

The ninth chapter of St. John is the story of a man born blind, upon whom Jesus bestowed the gift of eye-sight. The story is complicated by many details, some of which are of a minute kind, and is interspersed with various questionings which arose in the progress of it. If this story is not historical and authentic, it is, to say the least, very difficult to imagine the artistic skill which could have so imitated simplicity in constructing it. Where is anything in the slightest degree parallel to it to be found? At the beginning of this narrative we read that Jesus explained the man's blindness as being an occasion "for manifesting the works of God." "I must work the works of Him that sent Me. . . . . Whilst I am in the world, *I am the light of the world.*" This fact, His being the light of the world, determined the nature of the work now to be done. That work is thus reported to his neighbors by the blind man: "A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash; and I went and washed, and I received sight." The occurrence is represented as evoking in a curious manner the prejudice and bigotry of the Pharisees, beginning with the charge, "This man is not of God, because He keepeth not the Sabbath day." Speaking in the spirit of the narrative, we should say, What singular manifestations of the *blindness* of the Pharisees! The end was that the Pharisees angrily "cast out" the man who had received the new sense of sight. Then, we read, "Jesus found him and said to him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is He, Lord,

that I might believe on Him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen Him, and it is He that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped Him. And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind. And some of the Pharisees which were with Him heard these words, and said unto Him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth." Is it not wonderful to observe how the gift of sight was made the instrument for training the blind man in the knowledge of Christ until, with the confession, "Lord, I believe," he began to follow the Light of the World, and no longer to walk in darkness? and how, on the other hand, it was made the occasion of convicting and exposing the blindness of those who thought themselves enlightened, and therefore resisted the Light? Without obtrusive comments, certainly, but with unmistakable intention, this work of God is made by the Evangelist the stepping-stone by which his readers, together with those concerned in the event, ascend by the simplest of methods from the things of sense into the invisible world.

Observe next the narrative of the eleventh chapter, the raising of Lazarus from the dead. We pass from the bustle and agitation of the former scene to one of more pathetic interest. We enter the chamber of death and of the purest domestic love. Lazarus and his sisters were personal friends of the Lord Jesus, and Lazarus

lay dying. His sisters send to Jesus the message, "Lord, he whom thou lovest is sick." Jesus explains the sickness, as He had before explained the blindness. "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." Here again, details of varied and touching character are related. We pass these by, and go with Jesus into the house of the sisters. Martha says to him, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, *I am the resurrection and the life:* he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto Him, Yea, Lord; I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world." Those words of Jesus were His own interpretation of the wonderful work He was about to perform. The raising of Lazarus to life was a sign of the spiritual power going forth from Him, through which all who *believed in Him* should become alive from the dead.

> "Then one deep love doth supersede
> All other, when her ardent gaze
> Roves from the living brother's face,
> And rests upon *the Life indeed.*"

Our third example shall be from the Apostolic History (Acts iii. iv.). Peter and John were going up into the

Temple, when a lame man who lay at the gate asked an alms of them. "Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle-bones received strength. And he, leaping up, stood, and walked, and entered with them into the Temple, walking and leaping and praising God." St. Peter finds two occasions for interpreting this act. On both, he makes it bear witness to his risen Lord, the Prince of Life. It is He who has invigorated the impotent members of the lame man. "Ye killed the Prince (or Author, ἀρχηγόν) of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. And His name, through faith in His name, hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know; yea, the faith which is by Him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all." These words were spoken to the multitude who gathered round the lame man and the Apostles. On the next day, the two Apostles were brought before the council, and asked, "By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?" In the answer of St. Peter, our English translation fails to give the verbal agreement on which the significance of the explanation depends. St. Peter speaks of the man as having been "saved" or made sound, and then proceeds to ascribe all saving or making sound to the Risen Jesus. "Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, if we this day be examined of the good deed done to the

impotent man, by what means he has been *made sound* (*σέσωσται*); be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by Him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there saving health (*σωτηρία*) in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given amongst men, whereby we must be *made sound* (*σωθῆναι*)." This act of power is the one which is made most prominent in the Acts: and this is plainly set forth as an intelligible *sign* of a spiritual reality, testifying of the Lord of life as the fountain of all health and strength to men.

It would be easy to extend these illustrations further. But these may suffice to show with what precision and clearness the mighty works of our Lord and of His Apostles were interpreted, as tokens of His glory who was the Light and Life and Saviour of mankind.

It is not the purpose of this tract to explain the difficulties of the Scriptural narratives. I refer, therefore, in this place, to two miracles which are the two exceptions to the beneficent or restorative character of our Lord's works, — the destruction of the swine into which the devils entered, and the withering of the barren fig-tree, — only to observe that, in harmony with the general significance of the miracles, these may be taken as *signs* that the lower products of nature are to be freely spent upon the spiritual instruction of men.

4. I have said that we do not know why signs and wonders were done at one time and place, and not at another. The Scriptures do not profess to give a complete account of the mighty works done by the Lord and His Apostles, nor do they set forth any theory which governed the distribution of these works. But they give us some important hints as to the mental states to which physical wonders were intended to appeal: and this subject — the relation between the New Testament "miracles" and those in whose sight they were wrought — is well deserving our consideration.

The apparently easy theory which accounts for miracles by the principle that a supernatural revelation requires to be supernaturally attested, that is, by miracles, would find it hard to surmount one difficulty in the fact which we have already noticed, that our Lord and His Apostles contemplate the possibility of signs and wonders being wrought by false Christs and false prophets, — of a Gospel being preached by an angel from heaven, which true men ought to reject with curses. Another difficulty presents itself in the *reserve* with which the wonderful works of the Gospel were exhibited, and the corresponding slightness of the evidence by which, for things difficult of belief, they are enforced upon modern inquirers. It has been found necessary to add the supplementary theory, that the miracles themselves were intended to be a trial of faith; that those who are favorably disposed will believe them without demanding stronger evidence; that those who insist upon more conclusive evidence exhibit a hostile

state of mind which deserves no encouragement. It would not be fair to urge the taunt, that this is only arguing in a circle; that we are asked to believe in the revelation because of the miracles, and in the miracles because of the revelation. The reply would be, that the miracles and the revelation mutually support one another, and that the evidence for the one and the goodness of the other combine to make up just enough proof to satisfy a rightly disposed person. This is the position which has been taken up by the greater number of moderate divines. I mention it partly to remind my readers how seriously this view, that the miracles are themselves a trial of faith, qualifies that which makes them the foundation of faith; but more particularly to contend, that in following Scripture we have a better explanation of the reserve in question than to suppose it was intended to make miracles just not too easy to believe.

We may, perhaps, distinguish three aspects of the wonderful works of Christ and His Apostles.

The first is the most general and superficial. They were wrought in the face of the multitude, in an age and in countries in which some kind of supernatural action was not considered a great rarity, to excite an interest and to bear a public witness. They produced both a favorable and a hostile feeling towards those who wrought them; and the favorable feeling had often some evil, sometimes little that was good, in it.

We can perceive, secondly, a reason for the working of more abundant and more striking signs in particular

places. Where the people believed, rightly or wrongly, in evil spirits and sorcery, in malignant and disorderly influences proceeding from the spiritual world, there the powers of the true kingdom, the powers of order and freedom and beneficence, were put forth in acts which appealed directly to the minds of the ignorant and superstitious, and which proclaimed an authority stronger than that of demons. The common multitudes of Judæa were of the class which thus required to be treated like spoilt and frightened children. When the Gospel of the Kingdom went forth from Jerusalem after the day of Pentecost, it came first to Samaria, where the people had been bewitched by the sorceries of Simon, of whom they said, This man is the great power of God. Philip went amongst them as the preacher of Christ, using no sorceries, but healing the possessed, the paralytic, and the lame. Seeing these signs, the people gave heed to what Philip had to say. In barbarous Lycaonia, Paul, doing a work like that of Peter and John at the gate of the temple, caused Barnabas and himself to be taken for Jupiter and Mercurius; and then bore witness to the excited multitude of the one living God, maker of heaven and earth and sea and all things therein, who had given signs of Himself unto men in filling their hearts with food and gladness. At Ephesus, where the bondage to magical arts was so strong that the books of charms, the *Ἐφέσια γράμματα*, which were offered up in sacrifice to the Gospel, were found to be worth 50,000 pieces of silver, "God wrought special mighty works (*δυνάμεις*

οὐ τὰς τυχούσας) by the hands of Paul." Amongst the kindly barbarians of Melita there was a general healing of those who had diseases. But we do not hear of marvellous works being done at Athens, at Corinth, or at Rome. The sagacious mind of Luther observed this purpose of "*the visible and bodily wonders*" of the kingdom of Christ, — their direct antagonism to vulgar heathen superstitions, — as we may gather from the following passage in his *Table-talk:* "So long as Jupiter, Mars, &c. ruled among the heathen, — that is, were held and worshipped for gods, the Jews having also very many idols which they served, — it was necessary that first Christ, and after Him the Apostles, should do many miracles, corporal and spiritual, both among the Jews and Gentiles, to confirm this doctrine of faith in Christ, and to take away and root out all worshipping of idols. The visible and bodily wonders flourished until the doctrine of the Gospel was planted and received, and Baptism and the Lord's Supper established. But the spiritual miracles, which our Saviour Christ holds for miracles indeed, are daily wrought, and will remain to the world's end." (Luther's *Table-talk*, ccxxvii.)

There is a third use of the mighty works of Christ, as telling upon the minds of men, which is perhaps their highest. St. John directs our thoughts to this, when he tells us that the first sign which Jesus wrought, done quietly and almost secretly, manifested His glory to His disciples, so that they believed on Him. It was the especial purpose of the Lord Jesus to educate the

minds of His companions and disciples into the true knowledge of Himself. This education was gradual and manifold. It could not be accomplished at one stroke by an assertion or a miracle. Through a daily awakening and nourishing and feeding of their spiritual apprehensions they were to be brought to *know* Him as the Son of the Father, as the Word of the Eternal Maker manifest in flesh. Now every mighty work, in proportion to its significance, was instructive to the minds of the disciples. Let it be borne in mind, that an act which was not thoroughly understood at the time might be treasured in the memory, and be there a seed which would afterwards germinate and spring up into fruit of wisdom. For those who believed in Jesus, it was not necessary that His wonderful works should be displayed publicly, should be tested by investigation, should be separated from works of other men. It was only necessary that each act should open out more clearly to their eyes that glory of which they already had some perception.

No one who is really acquainted with the Gospels will doubt that this view of the works of Christ, as being lessons concerning His nature and the Father's, which would have a growing significance to the minds of those who believed in Him and loved Him, is one which was most familiar to the Evangelists. Those divines, both in ancient and modern times, who have drunk deepest into the spirit of the Gospels, have delighted to illustrate this view. A well-known example is to be found in the discourse of the great Augustine upon the sign of Cana

in Galilee. A quotation from this discourse will best bring home to the reader's mind the method of interpretation which has such high sanction. "It is the same God who, throughout the whole creation, daily worketh miracles, which have become cheap in men's eyes, not through their easiness, but through their constancy; whereas those rare and unusual actions which were done by the same Lord, that is, by the Word, for our sakes become incarnate, excited far greater wonder, not because they were greater than those which He does every day in the creation, but because, as for these which are done every day, it is as it were in the natural course of things that they are brought about; while, as for those, it is by the efficacy of a power which is as it were immediately present, that they are exhibited in the sight of men's eyes. We said, as ye remember, one dead man rose again, and people were amazed: and yet the daily births of those who before were not, excite no wonder. So, at water turned into wine, who does not marvel, though God doth the same in vines every year? *But forasmuch as whatsoever things were done by the Lord Jesus serve not only to stir up our hearts by their marvellous nature, but also to edify those hearts in the doctrine of faith, it behooves us to search diligently what all these things mean, that is, of what they are signs.*" (Homilies on St. John, IX. § 1.)

It may be a slight help in the consideration of this aspect of the signs of the Heavenly Kingdom, to compare them to the *experiments* which scientific teachers exhibit in order to illustrate the working of the laws of

nature. A lecturer who wishes to make manifest the ordinary, unperceived effects of oxygen and of carbonic acid, can easily produce by his skill certain unusual phenomena, which strike the ignorant as marvellous and arbitrary, but which the instructed know to be really the operation of the selfsame powers which are working every day around us.

I have thus far been endeavoring to persuade the reader to look at the "miracles" of the Gospel as they are presented to us in that Book which tells us all we can know about them. In the following reflections, which I offer with less confidence, we shall regard the subject from the position we occupy in this age and at the present crisis.

(1.) The main problem before us,-with reference to which alone the question of miracles has any importance, is the intensely serious one, What is to be believed concerning a God and His dealings with men? The answer which the faith of Christendom gives to such a question is essentially this, that the Eternal God, the Maker of all, has manifested Himself in His Son, Jesus of Nazareth, and in Him has claimed us as His children, partakers of His Spirit. This is the word which went forth with the Apostles from Jerusalem into the world. By this word the Church was called into being; of this it exists to bear witness. Whatever have been the varieties of opinion and belief amongst Christians, every section of the Christian world has confessed a supreme God, who made Himself known through a Son, who was born, died, and rose again. Now it is just this, the

universal faith of Christendom, which seems doubtful to the scepticism of our day. We cannot shut our eyes to the fundamental nature of modern unbelief or doubt; the boldness of sceptics compels us to recognize it openly. The conflict between that simple word, and the unbelief which rejects it, is not, indeed, new or modern. In all ages, even the most orthodox, when scarcely a whisper of infidelity has been heard, the testimony that the Eternal God has redeemed the world out of darkness by the death and resurrection of His Son has been resisted by an amount of conscious, but secret, unbelief which God only knows, — by a hundred times as much of practical unconscious unbelief. But at the present day, the arguments and influences which tell upon the minds of men, and which are used against the Christian faith, professedly go to the root of the matter. And how many of those who live in orthodox acquiescence might not be startled by these arguments into asking themselves the question, "Do I, then, honestly for myself, believe that the Being who made me sent His Son to be the Saviour of the world and the Lord of men? Does this fact govern my thoughts and doings as it would if I believed it?" The influences which move outspoken unbelievers to utterance are at work upon us all. Those scientific and historical principles which are declared to make impossible the belief in a God who sent His Son into the world, and constituted Him the Head of mankind, are very generally accepted amongst us. If by some few the victory of these principles over the faith of Christians is loudly proclaimed, by more it

is secretly confessed; and in still more, they struggle with uncertain success against the dear traditions and convictions to which the heart still clings, and of which it refuses to be bereaved.

These things being so, we have heard, or a former generation has handed down to us, an appeal to miracles. It is said, "This manifestation of God, which seems so incredible, might well and safely be rejected if it had nothing but naked assertion to rest upon. But it has attestations in works done by Jesus Christ and His Apostles which no human power could have wrought, which are departures from the course of nature, and which could only be Divine. Whatever was spoken with authority by one who had the power of working miracles must have come from God, and therefore, whatever we might otherwise think of it, is to be received as true." But this appeal is replied to by doubts thrown upon the nature and the reality of the miracles themselves. "The evidence supplied by the report of the miracles is not strong enough to convince us." "Hardly any evidence would persuade us of the real occurrence of anything so unnatural as a miracle; we take the liberty to disbelieve the eyes of other men when they tell us they saw one, for we would not believe our own." I need not do more than allude to the ordinary arguments against miracles which are set forth by Professor Baden Powell in his Essay. These arguments, professing as they do to rest upon principles now universally received, might well have suggested, as they have suggested to many, a reconsideration of the nature and bearing of

what are called miracles. But they have been met too commonly with a loud outcry, and with a most dangerous innovation upon the old creeds of the Church. It is attempted to impose miracles as if by Divine authority upon the faith of men. Those who will not believe them are denounced as atheists. The Church formerly called men to a belief in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Now you may hear it more than insinuated that such belief is secondary, compared with a belief in miracles and in the infallibility of the Bible. The true Word of God, the Gospel concerning His Son Jesus Christ, is thrust into the background; and our generation is invited to witness the struggle, whether by authority, by arguments offensive and defensive, and, above all, by the fear of the alternative of atheism, men may be compelled to believe in Divine interferences to suspend the order of nature.

God forbid that English Christians should accept the issue thus proposed to them. If there is any truth in the Scriptures, His blessing will rest upon those who bring forward His Gospel in advance of all arguments or traditions, even if they can do nothing but seriously repeat it, and trust to its being its own evidence. "If I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?" "We are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him." "By manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." These sayings, and such as these, are a sufficient warrant to us for expecting that the truth concerning God and His

redemption of mankind will commend itself to the hearts of men, without requiring suspensions of the order of nature to introduce it. If God has ceased to give His living testimony to His own word, human testimony will be of little avail: if He still gives it, we ought to beware how we let any other recommendations appear to take its place. I do not say that God may not make His voice heard through the signs and wonders recorded in the New Testament, but that He may choose other modes of appeal to many minds; and that if we reverence the Word of God, and His Holy Spirit bearing witness to it, we shall be careful how we limit by any theory the freedom of His persuasions. It is infinitely the *safest* thing for us, and times of confused opinions like the present will bring it home forcibly to our minds, to be as *simple* as we can in our testimony. If we build walls of our own, and daub them with untempered mortar, however strong or necessary we may think them, God will break them down, and bring them to the ground.

Professor Stanley, in his interesting account of the Nicæan Council, relates two stories, which, whether they are true, or whether they express a conviction in the mind of the Church, are almost equally instructive. Many popular discussions of doctrine took place, he says, previously to the formal opening of the Council. In one of these, after divines had been endlessly disputing, a layman stepped forward, and abruptly said, "Christ and the Apostles left us, not a system of logic, nor a vain deceit, but a naked truth, to be guarded by faith and good works." On another occasion, a heathen philoso-

pher had been contending with learned Christians, and had always slipped, *velut anguis lubricus*, out of the grasp of their arguments. An aged confessor hereupon stepped forth to meet him. "In the name of Jesus Christ," he said, "hear me, philosopher. There is one God, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible: Who made all things by the power of His Word, and by the holiness of His Holy Spirit. This Word, by which name *we* call the Son of God, took compassion on men for their wandering astray, and for their savage condition, and chose to be born of a woman, and to converse with men, and to die for them; and He shall come again to judge every one for the things done in this life. These things we believe without curious inquiry." After a few more direct words like these, the philosopher yielded. "Hear," he said, "my learned friend. So long as it was a matter of words, I opposed words to words; and whatever was spoken I overthrew by my skill in speaking; but when, in the place of words, power came out of the speaker's lips, words could no longer resist power, man could no longer resist. If any of you felt as I have felt, let him believe in Christ, and let him follow this old man in whom God has spoken." (*Eastern Church*, p. 132.)

It would be foolish, no doubt, to imagine that unbelievers may be captured by a *coup de main*, through the mere reiteration of any such simple statements. But it is not foolish to bring out the unspeakable importance of giving its due prominence to the simplest affirmation of what God is, and what He has done for men. The

acts called the miracles have their place in the records of the life of Christ. They are so bound up with all else that is told us regarding Him, that the history must be torn in fragments if we attempt to sever the signs and wonders from the other acts and discourses of Jesus. But we may fairly ask men to receive such a message as St. Paul delivered at Athens or at Rome, *before* we press them to make up their minds on the subject of miracles. If they will not believe in a Father who has communicated His Will to men for reasons independent of miracles, they are not likely to be persuaded, though a man rose from the dead. If they do believe that the Maker has sent His Son into the world to save the world, they are not likely to find any offence in such acts as the Gospels ascribe to Christ. The miracle of miracles must be the existence of a Living God. If we do not believe this, it is impossible that any smaller miracles should prove it to us. If we do believe in a Living God, no acts, however marvellous, which are in harmony with His nature and will, can seem to us incredible. The signs and wonders of the Gospel should keep their subordinate place in the history which contains them, and should be studied each where it is, if we would try with what force they appeal to our reasonable belief.

(2.) But after that the miracles have been restored to their right place, we shall still be bound to listen respectfully to whatever science has to say concerning them. To make light of science is not only foolish and ruinous, but it also betrays a want of reverence towards the Creator, and of faith in the Creation as His work.

If, as some assert, the conclusions of science directly contradict the faith in a Living God, then indeed it is extremely superfluous to attempt a defence of miracles. The philosopher who supposes that the course of nature proclaims, "There is no God," is not likely to be converted by the description of certain improbable phenomena reported by persons whose whole soul was possessed by belief in a God. The Confession, "Cœlo tonantem credidimus Jovem regnare," may come naturally enough from the ignorant; it could never be extorted from a student of science. But it is worth while considering whether, in the few cases in which science leads men to atheistic conclusions, the God who is denied is the true God of order, justice, and beneficence, upholding a universal harmony; or a Being outside of nature, manifesting Himself by occasional irruptions into her regular course.

But it has been said that science, *because* it testifies of such a God as we have named, necessarily discredits the miraculous. Now, it may be fair and reasonable to ask the philosopher, first of all, whether there is anything in the course of nature which forbids him to believe that God should speak to men by a Son. Science will not tell him that God has done so: but when this is declared to him, with strong presumptions in support of it, has science, we may rightly ask, anything to say against it? The previous settlement of the essential question will make subordinate questions easier to consider. But the student may reply, "The history which is everywhere brought to me as the au-

thentic account of God's revelation of Himself in His Son, contains certain acts of the kind called miraculous. They are interferences with the course of nature, effected, it is assumed, by supernatural power. In such acts my knowledge of nature teaches me to disbelieve: and this, of course, discredits the very history on which you rely." And it must be admitted that an attempt to cut out from the Gospel narratives "the supernatural element," would make such havoc in them, that we should no longer know what to make of them, or how to trust them.

The battle about miracles is not one of logic. The uniformity which has been observed in nature, however exact and all-pervading, is no *proof* that the Creator could not or would not, upon sufficient cause, interfere with the order which He otherwise upholds. But if the contemplation of natural laws makes an irresistible impression upon the minds of all who study them, that impression is rightly more powerful than a logical argument. What, then, is the impression thus made upon the minds of those who are familiar with nature? Certainly not, as I have already said, that there is nothing *wonderful* in the universe, or that whatever they cannot explain is an imposture. According to all testimony, the wonder that is nourished by knowledge is at least as deep and real as the wonder that is the offspring of ignorance. And the wisest of philosophers are the readiest to confess that they are surrounded by phenomena which they cannot explain; that they are daily and hourly conversant with problems which they cannot

solve. But, in their knowledge and their ignorance alike, they assure us they learn to worship and trust in *order*. What they marvel at is the subtlety of the harmonies which increasing knowledge enables them to discover. They will not call anything knowledge except the apprehension of relations. To explain a phenomenon is to discover a cause for it, to reduce it to its place in the universal order.

Now, this is surely not a feeling to guard against. It is one which we should all desire to receive and to cherish. When we fancy that we have to complain of it, we are not complaining of the worship of order, but of some narrowness or conceit which limits and perverts it. Examples of such perversion are common enough. Every year shows us some new discovery, possibly introduced and vaunted by quacks, derided in the name of the laws of nature by hasty and arrogant philosophers, but ultimately understood, received, and shining as a light in a region which formerly had been dark. Some physiologists have been so engrossed by the laws of human existence which they themselves investigate, as to forget that there are other laws not less necessary to recognize, and have proclaimed that the science of the human body leads men inevitably to the lowest conclusions of materialism. Others, not so grossly materialistic, insist upon reducing human volition to a necessary and invariable sequence. Beginning with the laws which they know in the external world, they seek to construct a system of nature so vast that it shall include all that we mean when we speak of the freedom

of the human will. A little more courage would enable them to include God also in their system of nature; and they would then have no more difficulty in finding a place for miracles than for any unusual exercise of human volition. But more modest and cautious men of science, who worship order with a more perfect worship, shrink from such system building, which they know to be fatal to the discovery of truth. With the true spirit of science, which desires to find out an order, and not to impose a system, the Christian is bound to sympathize.

Let us go heartily then with the student of science in his aversion to *prodigies*. Let us be as sure as he is that the true God will rather reveal Himself in wisdom, justice, and beneficence, than in startling anomalies. And let us ask him to come with us to the New Testament. He knows the tendency of ignorant human nature to delight in prodigies. He knows the multitudes of astonishing miracles that fill the legends of superstitious ages. He knows that in the time of our Lord even the most cultivated of mankind were victims of magic and sorcery and enchantments. He knows that the East was the home from which these superstitions flowed. He knows that in Judæa a peculiarly dark and irrational fanaticism prevailed. He is informed that our sacred books were not written by some well-known authors, but were the legendary product of convictions and sentiments working in the popular mind. Well, we open these books; and though we find there the loftiest pretensions quietly put forth, though we read

of a Son of the Eternal God speaking and acting upon the earth, though He is said to have done countless wonderful works, we do not find one single irrational prodigy related. Nothing is done as a mere exercise of power; there is no attempt on the part of the writers to give an imposing theatrical air to the works which they describe. We believe that we can trace a moral and spiritual meaning, a wise purpose, in every act which Jesus Christ is said to have done. Is there nothing wonderful here? Is it not just such a wonder as the student of science would delightedly recognize, — the marvel of a beautiful spiritual order asserted in the midst of confusion? We see in the world about us a continual struggle of life against death, of well-being against decay. The whole of the wonderful works of the New Testament (with only a few apparent exceptions) are illustrations of this struggle; triumphs of the beneficent tendencies of nature over the tendencies to misery and dissolution. Surely these are not works which should repel one who watches with reverence the course of nature.

The signs of extraordinary power in the works of Christ, we will suppose, do not attract him. It is difficult to imagine the mind upon which the element of power would not tell with some force; but we are at liberty, I think, to assume that the cultivated mind might be impervious to such an argument. But will not the philosopher, assuming the hypothesis of God speaking to men through Jesus Christ in that country and at that age, at least *excuse* the superhuman power

put forth? If we go to savage tribes, and wish to raise them out of their idolatrous superstitions, do we not legitimately do miracles in their eyes, showing both knowledge and power which to them are simply superhuman? It is sometimes asked, why the power of doing miracles is not granted now to those who go forth to convert the heathen. It *is* granted. The same kind of advantages which the Apostles possessed and used in those mighty works by which their Gospel was commended, we also possess and use. Missionaries like Dr. Livingstone, who bear with them into savage countries the civilized arts, the powers of healing, and the mental and moral superiority of European Christendom, are only too readily taken for superhuman personages. If we do not awe the Brahmins of India by mighty works, neither did St. Paul thus awe the philosophers of Athens or of Rome.

I am speaking of the miracles now as tending to attract men to an acknowledgment of Christ, or to repel them from it. I allow that, antecedent to the acknowledgment of Christ, the doing of a mighty work by such a command over the resources of nature as must have belonged to the Son of God, whilst it would strike the ignorant and superstitious, might not be the best way of appealing to the modern student of science. He would naturally be called upon to use his own methods. The Gospel comes to him in this age with immense presumptions in its favor. It was believed by his fathers, it is believed by those whom he loves and honors; it has wrought changes and created societies of the highest

character in the world's history. It tells him of a living God, who calls men to come to Him, that they may worship Him as His children, in spirit and in truth. It tells him of a Son of God, who is also Son of Man, the Redeemer and Restorer of the race, in whom all men may have trust and hope, to whose invincible authority every man and every nation owes homage. It tells him of a Spirit of Truth, One and Divine, through whom men may have fellowship with God and with one another. Whether the Gospel is true or not must be proved by all the facts of history and life. If we act upon it as true, do we find ourselves guided, or led astray? Do the facts of history bear witness to it, or do they confound it? Do the principles of morality and the laws of action refer themselves to some such ground as the nature of God and our relation to Him as His children, or to some other, and not to this? Is the existence of the Church to be accounted for best on the hypothesis that there is a Divine calling for mankind, or on some other? We might go on multiplying such questions, and no one has a right to limit them. The revelation of God must stand the test of facts in all regions into which it enters, and some proofs commend themselves to one mind, others to another. The Church, with its sacred Book and its permanent ordinances, is charged with delivering the witness; the Spirit of God, through any of His manifold operations, through science, through history, through His touch on the secret chords of the heart, confirms the witness. This was St. John's theory of evidences; this was Lu-

ther's. We depend on the Living God, who teaches the hearts of men, to prove the truth of what His Word and Sacraments convey. We dare not refer doubters to any teacher less wise than God Himself.

The Jews of old, angry at being referred to the Father, demanded a sign from Heaven. It seems to me by no means certain that many sceptics of the present day are not unconsciously doing the same thing. They practically ask some proof of the Gospel which their own better philosophy would teach them not to look for. The proof of the Gospel is in every-day facts, in their own inward experience, in the wants of mankind, in the nobler instincts and convictions of the human race, in the order of nature and the harmony of society. These things do not produce the Gospel, which has come from God, and is the heritage of Christendom; but they are the facts by which, when it is doubted, it is practically and necessarily tried.

(3.) I have only a few words more to say upon a mighty significance which the signs and wonders and powers of the Kingdom of Heaven possess to those who can look upon them as real acts of the Son of God. There is a tendency in modern philosophy — if it is not a false one we may as well give up our whole cause at once — to separate Earth from Heaven, the acts and relations and powers of our visible life from the influence and government of God. Those who choose to take the actual condition of things in society and in nature as the only state or order of which they can have any cognizance, find it easier in some respects to account for

it by putting God at a certain distance from it. The thought of God as really present in nature and society implies an idea of something better, a hope of reaching it, a struggle after much change and renewal. If you have once pronounced these things to be vain and chimerical, you must begin to thrust out God from your world. And then there is no chance of retaining long a real belief in God at all. The sanguine divines who wish to make the acquiescent philosophy compatible with something of the old religion, by keeping the actual course of things in one sphere, and "faith" in another, will satisfy neither the cravings of the believing soul nor the rational instincts of the philosopher. God's hand must be felt, His will must be confessed, in nature and in human life, or we shall not believe in God at all.

The most vital principle in the New Testament is a mistake and a snare, unless Heaven and Earth are actually wedded together in the Son of God made Man. Unless the Will of God is the living spring and guide of all things, everything said and done by our Lord and His Apostles was a vanity. "You shall see heaven opened, and angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man," was their Master's promise, which the Apostles believed to have been most strictly fulfilled. Now if we cling to the same faith, and dare not cast away, for ourselves and for the world, the hope with which it inspires us, we shall find much light and comfort in the contemplation of the mighty works of Christ, as true signs that this earth and the human beings

upon it are subjects of the Kingdom of Heaven. They will be signs to us that the order and well-being of all things are indeed sustained by the Word of God; that He gives their skill to the physician, to the cultivator of the ground, to the rulers of nations; that all those who are trying to do good are working in unison with a Will that is at the heart of the universe.

We do not say that the knowledge and the will of a man, when they come into play, *suspend* the laws of nature. If I hold a stone in my hand, or set a magnet so as to hold up a heavy piece of iron, the law of gravity acts as regularly as if the stone or the iron fell to the ground. If the skill of a physician cures a patient of a fever, no physiological law is suspended any more than if the patient were left alone to die. But the human knowledge and will do effect results. Suppose them withdrawn, and things would be very different from what they are. So with the Divine Will. We ought not to say that any operation of it, however miraculous, suspends the laws of nature: we cannot possibly know that it does, and why should we suppose it? But we may rightly recognize the working of the Divine Will as making the forces of nature its instruments. We may see it tending, by subtle and harmonious processes, through much that seems destructive and irregular, towards order and beauty and life. We may see it using external things for the training of the spirits of men. And in this contemplation the works of Christ will be, as they have been, a constant aid. It belongs to their true nature, not to discourage the efforts of

science, but to inspire them with hope. But they are an abiding witness that God holds the spiritual interests of mankind to be more precious than the outward things which minister to them.

When we have learned to regard the miracles of Christ as interpreting rather than suspending the laws of nature, we shall undoubtedly expect that an acknowledgment of Him would in a high degree promote the true ends of science. We may rejoice to think that homage has been often paid to Him when His name has not been spoken by the lips. The humility and teachableness, the devotion to truth, the freedom from baseness, the admiration of order and beauty, which characterize the truly scientific mind, are in essence a worship of Him in whom the just and wise and loving God is revealed to men. But if the Person who died that He might redeem the whole world, and in whose clear manifestation both we and the things about us shall find our freedom and glory, be more distinctly recognized as holding the operations of nature in His hand, in order that they may serve the Father's will, the laws of nature themselves ought to shine out more clearly and gloriously, and the relations of external things to the spirit of man ought to be more accurately understood. To this test, as to so many others, we must desire that the Revelation of God in Christ should be practically brought. Let us only trust it enough, and refrain from corrupting it with our own conceits. We shall then have no need to guard it with threats and definitions. It will prove itself to be the power of God and the wisdom of God, stronger than

all its apologists on the one side, and all its assailants on the other.

In the excellent and comprehensive work of Dean Trench, entitled "Notes on the Miracles of our Lord," these acts are expounded on Scriptural principles, and with much illustration from the great fathers and other divines of the Church. From the wide circulation and high authority of this treatise, it might have been hoped that sound views on the subject of the miracles had taken a more thorough hold of the religious mind of the country than recent publications show them to have gained. A more recent work of Mr. Westcott, "Characteristics of the Gospel Miracles," is very valuable for its exhibition of the general relations of all the miracles to the nature and manifestation of Christ. In addition to these, I may name an essay by Sir Edward Strachey, on "Miracles and Science," the production of a well-informed, thoughtful, and devout mind, which well deserves the attention of the students of modern science.

NOTES.

(A.) *On the Uniformity of Nature.*

Mr. Buckle, in his recent volume ("History of Civilization in England," vol. ii.), stands forth as a most uncompromising champion of the uniformity or regularity of nature. In the foregoing essay I have contended that a reverence for the actual order of the universe is not condemned, but encouraged, by the accounts of the Gospel miracles, on the following grounds: — that no violation or suspension of any natural law is asserted, or need be assumed, to have accompanied those works; that they are in harmony with the observed tendencies of nature; that they are ascribed to the One Creating Power, and not to any irregular interference with His will; and that, conjointly with their manifestation, the worship of wonders or prodigies is distinctly and strongly denounced. But Mr. Buckle draws inferences from the regularity of nature which may well make any controversy about miracles seem an idle waste of time. In his view, it excludes all "moral government" of mankind; it makes the belief in a God who rewards and punishes no better than "the draff and offal" of a worn-out superstition. Most of his readers will be inclined to ask, how so mechanical a theory of the universe accounts for Mr. Buckle himself. If the world is not under a moral government, Mr. Buckle's desire to impart to the Scotch people the

benefit of a moral reformation is as impassioned as if it were. If there is no supremely wise distribution of rewards and punishments, Mr. Buckle does his best to supply the deficiency by dispensing honest praises in the way of reward, and by an uncommonly vigorous use of the lash for punishment. That system which includes the mind and works of this author must be elastic enough to make us hesitate before excluding anything from it, on the ground of its being irregular. It is difficult to understand how Mr. Buckle himself, with his ardent and not ungenerous temper, can endure to contemplate the dreary abomination which history must become when all the thoughts and deeds which have grown out of a belief in an active Divine government of the world are pronounced false and mischievous, and when the love of money is exalted to the second place amongst the principles to which the world is indebted. But when we find the presumed uniformity of nature appealed to in support of such conclusions, we have a right to ask philosophers to explain carefully what they understand by it. If they hold, with Mr. Buckle, that it is incompatible with a moral government of the world, they must show why it is more incompatible with this than with the actual progress of mankind, with the lives and acts of every father and ruler and citizen, of every philosopher and reformer, in the world. If they do not agree with him, they will feel called upon, by this conspicuous application of the term, to do their best to guard it from becoming a cant phrase of controversy, and to interpret

with scientific caution the real testimony of nature. The miracles which we have been considering ought not to override or to restrain the pursuit of truth; but their voice is serious enough to claim a hearing when they testify of a Son of Man not subject to nature, but using her methods as His own, of a Father whose will is at the centre of the universe, and who works towards the freedom and perfection of all His creatures, and of a universal Spirit of truth and love and life. How it is possible for science to disprove the existence of a righteous God, is not easy to imagine. It will only do the reverse, by giving evidence of the order and harmony which are declared by those who believe in such a God to be most characteristic of His mind. Whether history bears witness to a Divine Lord of men or not, the study of history must determine. Mr. Buckle is at least an unflinching combatant on the negative side; and the aspect of the laws and conditions of human existence which his theory gives us can scarcely be reproached as an *ad captandum* representation.

(B.) *On the Influence of the Imagination upon Science.*

I HAVE spoken of the possibility that the laws of nature themselves might shine out more clearly and gloriously in the light of such an acknowledgment of Christ as would be learnt from a true study of the miracles. That modern science wants some aid of this kind is asserted, with his usual force, by the same

author to whom we have just referred. In a striking digression (vol. ii. pp. 501 – 507), Mr. Buckle complains that "the advance of physical science is retarded by our neglect of the imaginative and emotional faculties." "There is in poetry," he says, "a divine and prophetic power, and an insight into the turn and aspect of things, which, if properly used, would make it the ally of science instead of the enemy." "Our age . . . . has a certain material, unimaginative, and unheroic character, which has made several observers tremble for the future." He therefore urges that "it is incumbent on physical philosophers to cultivate the imagination." Now, does not all experience teach, that the true nurse of the imaginative in thought, as well as of the heroic in action, is the recognition of the Divine presence and Will in the things about us? The spirit of worship, rather than the mere effort to generalize, is that by which men rise above the material, the unimaginative, and the unheroic. There is a Divine judgment on those who, when they know God, do not glorify Him as God, neither are thankful; and this is, first, that they become vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart is darkened; and then, when they have changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever, God gives them over to a reprobate or undiscerning mind, and to moral corruption. What, on the other hand, is so characteristic of that "noble English poetry of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries," which Mr. Buckle regards as

the mother of the noblest English science, as its confession of the righteous Will of God, in the creation, and in the affairs of men? Now, as ever, that which quickens and inspires the intellect, is the belief that the world is no dead, self-acting machine, but is alive with the purposes of a just and loving God.

V.

ON TERMS OF COMMUNION.

I. THE BOUNDARIES OF THE CHURCH.

By the Rev. C. K. P.

II. THE MESSAGE OF THE CHURCH.

By J. N. LANGLEY, M.A.

V.

TERMS OF COMMUNION.

I. THE BOUNDARIES OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.
By Rev. C. K. P.

II. THE MESSAGE OF THE CHURCH.
By J. N. Langley, M. A.

[It was announced that the first of these Tracts should appear with one upon the "Controversy between the Bishop of Oxford and a Layman." A Tract expressing the motives which have led a person, brought up in the strictest school of Dissent, to join the English Church, seems a more suitable pendant to it. The clergyman who is the author of the first Tract thinks, as many excellent clergymen think, that the main characteristic of the English Church is comprehensiveness; and that it may be made still more comprehensive. The writer of the second shows in what sense he sought and found comprehensiveness in the Church; but that he also sought for distinct and permanent truth, and found that. It seems good for Priests and People to compare two statements expressing such different habits of mind, and proceeding from such different quarters.]

THE BOUNDARIES OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

The writer wishes it to be distinctly understood, that he alone is responsible for the opinions contained in this Tract, and that where he has used the word "we" he must be understood as speaking, not in the name of the contributors to this series, but in his own and that of some friends whose views are, as he believes, in the main expressed by him.

> "Our little systems have their day;
> They have their day, and cease to be;
> They are but broken lights of Thee,
> And Thou, O Lord, art more than they."

THE Preface to the Book of Common Prayer is careful to assert an identity between the Church of England before and the Church of England after the Reformation. "The Service in this Church of England these many years hath been read in Latin to the people." And it would not be difficult to show that there is, politically and ecclesiastically, a greater coherence between ourselves and our unreformed fathers in the faith, than between even the Church of Rome before and the Church of Rome after the Council of Trent.

Yet, to keep pace with the vast outburst of free thought from, speaking generally, the accession of Henry VIII. to that of Charles II., a great yet gradual development took place in the ritual, doctrine, and discipline of the Church of England; and it were easy to mistake the sameness of the features, were we to look first to one and then to the other period without marking intermediate years of change. For the growth has been a human growth, and the change as it were the change of

a man. In her youth, calling herself Catholic and large-hearted, she held blindly by the opinions of her teachers, and, though at times she resented his power, allowed none to call in question the doctrine of him who sat in the chair of St. Peter. Then, Catholic still, yet setting less store by the name, it was her "wisdom to keep the mean between the two extremes of too much stiffness in refusing, and too much easiness in admitting any variation." Now, Catholic more than ever, her children in great number call her Protestant, a name to them implying larger freedom of thought, and adaptation to the needs of a changing time; and many of them exult in seeing that there is scarce a mode of English opinion which does not find its representative and exponent among those who minister and who teach in her name.

It cannot, however, be denied, that within and without her own pale are those who object strongly to the present position of the Church of England. Within, members of each of the two great parties into which the majority of her sons are divided protest against the sanctioned teaching of the other side, and assail still more vehemently those who join neither section, as men who have no true standing-place in her borders: without, she is considered narrow and exclusive, because formularies, however elastic, are found to have some limit, and articles, however vague, some definite grammatical construction. Moreover, each section within, each sect without, has some pet grievance, some creed, some service, some expression, some ceremony, which they would fain eradicate. Some object to the old tra-

ditions, and some to the new accretions; while all agree to ignore or forget the force of Æsop's fable, and the consequences which ensued when the old and the young wife each plucked out the hairs she disliked from the brows of a husband whom both revered, and both desired to improve.

We must look more closely at what is actually taught and done within the Church of England, before we can consider the desirableness of such practice and doctrine, or the objections of objectors.

It would not be denied by many, that in adjoining parishes, or even in adjoining streets of our large towns, there stand churches between whose ritual is almost as great a difference as between the ceremonial of Italy and Scotland. A foreigner who should spend one Sunday among us, and afterwards attempt to tell his countrymen what he had seen in an English church, would describe one out of many very varied scenes. He might speak of a building in all the pomp of decoration, or of mere whitewashed walls; of chanted services, in different places, or read from one high pulpit; of much that could touch the uneducated sense, or of that which could appeal only to the spirit of one who cared not for outward emblems. He might tell of doctrines preached which, except for mere technicalities, could have been delivered in a Roman Basilica, or, on the other hand, have been heard with approval in Geneva itself. And therefore, if he made a longer stay among us, and were of an inquisitive turn of mind, he might be somewhat puzzled to give a consistent report of us. Yet one thing would

strike him ; that these churches all had but one form of prayer, which spread a vast unity round all their differences ; they would all appeal to the sanction, at least, of the Prayer Book and Articles for their customs ; and each preacher would wish to be bound by the Bible, and judged as to the truth of his message by his agreement with it. And so he might come to the belief that our Church is, in these modern days, more inclusive than it seemed possible a definite Church could be ; and would admire or dislike her, as his mind inclined him to a narrow view of truth, or to the admission that truth was many-sided, even if most people can see only one side, and often need not, for practical purposes, see more than one.

Let me say openly, in the outset of these inquiries, that as I believe this is the view an intelligent person would take were he disengaged from our religious prejudices, so is it that which some among the clergy of the Church of England would wish to assert, and in which they glory. It may, of course, be suspected and said, that, finding ourselves in an inconsistent and assailable position, we try to defend it by a paradox ; and to such an argument there is no answer but a denial. There are those, and I am of the number, who gladly welcome the fact that our Insular Church touches on each side on some mode of Continental thought ; and while adapting herself to the present, loses none of her sympathy with the past. Souls under Roman teaching were ransomed from their bondage to sin, and brought near to Christ, and so she retains what was good in Roman doctrine

and rite; souls now are saved from evil, and men are trained by spiritual influences working under less of form and fetter, and therefore she gives free play to such influences, leaving her children now to walk all-but alone, now affording aid to weak wayfarers, and now almost carrying those who nearly fall. The Church of England, sinking so far as is possible technical differences, using words manifestly able to bear various meanings, is Catholic and Protestant at once; scarce placing any terms of agreement beyond a tacit and general approval on her lay members, and allowing to her ministers a wider difference of opinion than is given by any other religious body, with or without a definite rule of faith. To this position are two great classes of objectors, taken from among those who would not deny the facts before their eyes. The one class would reduce the bounds of the Church of England, either by adding to, or restricting the meaning of, her authorized expressions. It is certain that, so soon as men are agreed on the acceptation of a narrow shibboleth, they are for a time stronger and more united. But only for a time. Thought wakes, and men divide, and the tie which bound them bursts asunder if it be not very elastic. Thus sects multiply with an ever increasing rapidity; and men who are not sectarian, and long to consider themselves as members of the traditionally Apostolic Church, often prefer to stifle their honest convictions rather than be counted members only of some small and dividing sect. It is a miserable thought, too, for a loving mind, that, even if itself holds the truth, multitudes are falling away from

time-honored symbols for the lack of some small concession, and that men, one in soul, are kept asunder by outward differences.

We must perforce choose between a National Church allowing a vast variety of opinion, or a number of sects fenced off from each other, at first by slight barriers, which gradually condense into impassable walls of separation.

There are others who object to all fences and landmarks whatever within the broad field of Christendom, who would "sit apart, holding no forms of creed, yet contemplating all."

They think that this enables them to judge dispassionately of others, and would therefore disapprove a National Church, inasmuch as in a measure it seems to bind the nation to some theological propositions. And they assert that the standing-place actually afforded by that Church is but "a quicksand of proprieties and anathemas," on which men are afraid to move. We may say at once, that this "sitting apart" does not enable men to judge of others. We require distinct ground of our own before we can distinguish and understand the position of others on other hill-tops above the sea of doubt; but better were it to toss about forever, to "lie in hell," and let "death gnaw upon us," than be raised out of hell merely to damn others.

The allusion in the sentence above quoted is of course to the Athanasian Creed, to which it is often said, and sometimes believed, every member of the Church of England is bound to assent. We, on the contrary, hold

that a lay member of the Church of England is bound to no creed but that called the "Apostles' Creed," and to that only as interpreted by himself. He is bound, so far, by his baptism; and if he repudiates that creed, he repudiates the Church of his baptism, but not otherwise. And we would further believe, that a man may be a good Christian, and in lay-communion with the Church of England, who was unable to accept all the historical facts of the Lord's life, provided he accepted the spirit, and tried to act according to its teaching. Such is all required of members as a condition of membership; there are indeed other blessings of belief offered, but not imposed. Before she will allow a man to *teach*, she requires assent to other points, which are indeed her doctrines; yet not in any such sense as to exclude laymen who hold them not. It is required of the clergy that they accept the Prayer Book and Articles. To these each clergyman agrees at his ordination, both as deacon and as priest, at each change of curacy, at each institution to preferment, and whenever called on so to do by his bishop. The Articles are absolutely binding on all clergymen, so are the Rubrics, "subject," as has been well said, "to this proviso, that the rule prescribed be a thing practicable, which perhaps cannot be said of all rubrics in all Churches, or in all places of the kingdom, — nay, that it be a thing which falls within the minister's own power, so that he be not deprived of his liberty in acting, or restrained in it by the previous acts of other people, whereby that which would be practicable in itself is rendered not practicable by him." The question

of course rises, "How are these rubrics and formularies to be understood? is it possible to agree exactly in the meaning of the words used?" Probably no words in any book convey precisely the same ideas to the minds of all who read them, and within the limits of grammar and common sense a man must put his own construction on the words common to all; so that a clergyman who can agree to them need not distress himself with doubts as to his true position, because he does not agree with either school in the Church as to their interpretation, or, indeed, with any existing interpretation whatever.

As to the Canons, a clergyman subscribes only to the three articles contained in the 36th Canon: 1st, containing the declaration of the royal supremacy; 2d, the adherence to the Book of Common Prayer; 3d, agreement to the Articles of Religion. "I believe," says a writer of authority, "no one will say we are bound to pay obedience to them all according to the letter of them. For the alteration of customs, change of habits, and other circumstances of time and place, and the manner of the country, have made some of them impracticable, — I mean prudentially so, if not literally. Yet, on the other hand, they are of very considerable authority." To all which we may assent, adding this further, That this present century, as it has brought about so great a change in the opinions of thinking men, has, by that change, given us a "general tacit dispensation" with regard to the Canons, though, for the sake of many, it might be well if they could be revised, modified, or abolished. Still, the Church's laws stand on the same ground

as many disused civil laws, which no man thinks binding, and no judicial authority would enforce.

And surely in fixing these more definite rules of faith for her clergymen and for her laity, the Church is doing nothing hard or unnatural. She is acting on an universal and recognized law, that the teacher or the lawgiver shall be more strictly governed than those under them; even if the rules be self-imposed, they must be there, or all becomes confusion.

But though the clergy are thus enclosed in a narrower boundary than are the laity, no liberty of teaching can be greater than is theirs. It is the wisdom of the Church of England that her limits are so large, or, if it be pleasing so to call them, vague, that she includes many varied opinions. If she were found too strait to contain them all, there are those who would equally regret the expulsion from her pale of the extremest professors of her extremest schools. All these claim to find their doctrines in the Bible, that ultimate appeal of all theology, nor have we a right to say that any of them does *not* believe he finds his teaching there; and it is a great blessing that men so at issue can find a common meeting-place, where they can harmonize some, at least, of their many differences.

Unquestionably, however, all who join or remain in any body, ecclesiastical or civil, do thereby give a tacit assent to the general doctrines and propositions of the body, so far as they are laid down, even though they do not commit themselves to any exact statements. And it may be well to consider, what are the points on which is

left to English Churchmen an absolute liberty of opinion; and what are those wherein thought is prescribed a certain direction, however various in that direction may be the pathways she may tread.

Some matters which once seemed of the highest importance, need not now be discussed. For the difficulties of one age are not those of the years which follow. Those who are now, as of old, troubled by such questions as the use of the surplice, of the cross in baptism, and the ring in marriage, are very few in number, and very childish in mind. On all hands it is admitted that these things are mere unimportant accidents of worship and rule, involving no doctrine, asserting no great principle. When the nation was but recently freed from papal rule, when it was desired to mark as widely as possible the severance which had taken place, it is easy to understand how these trifles became of significance, as even straws on the gale are important when the tempest is drawing near. It is not these things which now draw towards Rome those who seek a shelter in her pale, but rather desires after an unity which she seems to possess, and a quietus for tender consciences, which she seems to offer.

But the great heart of England now only fears doctrines which straiten thought; Roman teaching, because narrowness seems the result of it; Calvinistic teaching, for the same reason; and not because of the quarter whence they come.

There is, perhaps, no subject on which thinking Englishmen dread dogmatism more than on the Inspiration

of Scripture. The Bible is that which all Christians prize as the record of their faith, their deliverance, and their hope. They feel its essential unity with itself, that it is a great and Divine drama. They acknowledge that a Spirit breathes through its words and several parts as through those of no other book. They admit its wonderful coherence, and the shadowing forth of the New Testament in the Old. They read in it a parable of the mystic march of all human nature. "The Bible," says Novalis, "begins nobly with Paradise, the symbol of youth, and concludes with the Eternal Kingdom, the Holy City." But as to the nature of that inspiration, Christians are not agreed, nor are they likely to agree. Modern thought has raised new questions on various books of the Bible, and asks in louder voice some that were raised of old. Modern criticism would alter the date of one, and the authorship of another, and reject verses and whole passages from the Canon; finds mistakes in facts and dates; expectations of events which could not, foretellings of others which never did occur. Such criticism may be, often is, rash and rude, so that some are tempted to reject it with scorn and indignation, and others accept it gladly, and swallow it without discrimination. But clearly the whole matter is just now in so unsettled a state, that a distinct definition of Inspiration, which gave place to any one theory alone, would offend many who, in the present condition of their knowledge, can accept entirely no one of the explanations offered them. It cannot, then, be too often repeated, that the Church

of England has never defined the word Inspiration; that wherever she uses it in her services, it is in the largest and loosest sense, — a Divine inbreathing, yet with no dogmatism as to its manner or extent. And while there is no doubt that the very narrowest views even of verbal dictation may be and are preached, as explanations of Inspiration, so also, thank God! are such words as these written by an English historian, or delivered in English pulpits. Inspiration is "the inflexible love of truth, which, being inseparable from the spirit of Christianity, would of itself be a sufficient guaranty for fidelity and honesty." (Dean Milman, "History of Christianity.")

Again: Inspiration is "a clear perception of those heavenly truths which the Holy Ghost reveals to man as the abiding thoughts of God, which ever repeat themselves in His eternal plan." (Rowland Williams, D.D., "Rational Godliness," Serm. 12.)

Again: it "has not as yet been defined what is meant by the Inspiration of Scripture, — a definition which must itself be referred to the common consent of those to whom the Scripture shall come." (Wilson, "Bampton Lectures," Lect. I.)

While so brave and noble words as these are written and preached uncensured, and authority *cannot* censure them, who shall dare say the Church of England's teaching is narrow on this matter of Inspiration?

In the whole range of literature is no such crying want as an English "Bibelwerk für die Gemeinde." "Who," said Mr. Kingsley many years ago, by the

mouth of Alton Locke, "who will write us a people's commentary on the Bible?" It was not hard to recognize the "fine Roman hand," which in part answered the question, under the signature of "Parson Lot," and under the name of "Bible Politics, or God justified to the People." These papers became too controversial, perhaps unavoidably, and then ceased; but there was in them enough to show that the work could be done, and that a clergyman or layman of the Church of England was, and perhaps they alone, free enough from trammels to do it.

It is not many years since a great outcry was heard because a clergyman, beloved and honored above the average, was supposed to have denied the eternity of punishment. He was deprived of an office he held in a college which was a private body; but even religious rancor could not shake his position as a teacher in the Church of England. The whole subject of future punishment is involved in the deepest mystery. A vast deal that is said in the New Testament thereon resolves itself into sensible imagery taken from the valley in which the filth of Jerusalem was consumed. A parable of our Lord, which seemed to many decisive, bears, on further examination, if indeed it conveys any dogmatic teaching, a lesson of hope rather than of despair; inasmuch as the spiritual condition of him who desired to send help and warning to his brethren was a clear improvement on that state in which he merely demanded relief for himself; and there is a growing conviction that the veil is in no degree withdrawn by

the faint hints and allusions, or anxious guessings, of inspired men. It is felt that since truly to know God is everlasting life, whether in this world or in the world to come, so not to know God is everlasting death, whether men seem to live or no. And we are content to leave conditions and places, as God has left them, unknown, and to think of them with hope, and not with terror.

We may be thankful that when the attempt was made to impose an article on Eternal Punishment on the Church of England, it failed; nor need we care *why* it was not imposed. And finding that the Athanasian Creed frames its expressions on the very words of Scripture, we can accept these in the sense, and only in the sense, in which we take the original sentences. When we find too, that that creed, translated as it is into Latinized and not into Saxon English, uses words in quite other than their present and popular use, that the words "eternal," "persons," "substance," "comprehensible," "salvation," "reasonable," "subsisting," have changed their meaning in the parlance of our ordinary congregations, we can fully assent to that creed in its real and theological sense. Yet we may freely confess that, seeing how great an offence it is to many among us, and to many who, but for it, would come among us, we should not regret it were it removed from our services, or used merely as the American Episcopal Church uses it, as a hymn of praise, like the *Te Deum;* which is indeed just as much a creed, though not received as a symbol of faith.

The doctrine somewhat vaguely described as the

Atonement — vaguely, inasmuch as grammarians are hardly in agreement on the meaning and derivation of the word — has undoubtedly received freer treatment in the hands of this than in those of the last generation. The hard and technical terms, such as "the signing and sealing a bond," "the satisfaction of the Father's anger," and so on, have given place, or are giving place, to other descriptions more human and more rational. Sermons like those of the late Mr. Robertson, essays like that of Professor Jowett, in his book on St. Paul's Epistles, are daily attracting more and more readers. Not that these writers are always consistent one with another, or with themselves. The mystery and the love are too great for words, which can only in part express the fulness of thought. And while the heart of man knows the love of God, the tongue of man stammers as it attempts to declare it. Here again, the Church of England does not attempt to define. She has, indeed, adopted one unfortunate expression in her second Article. She speaks of the death of Christ as that which "reconciles His Father to us," which many would wish to read, "reconciles us to the Father." Yet, for those on whom the Article is binding, the expression is no real stumbling-block, inasmuch as each man, knowing that he himself is an aggressor against God, may see in that death such manifestations of love as he needs to assure him that He is not forever angry against those who have sinned against Him. Man, when he is led back to God, requires some pledge, or what seems to him a pledge, that God is near, and not very far off.

In nothing is the temper and judgment of the Church of England more shown than in her absence of dogmatism on the subject of miracles and prophecy. Once, and now by many, miracles were regarded as a test of doctrine, and as interruptions of order; prophecy was mere prediction, and the moral element in the prophets' words of quite secondary importance. But there is a growing conviction that, on the contrary, doctrines are a test of miracles; and so strong a faith is there in the perfection of order, that men would first prefer in all possible cases to explain a miracle, and, when that is not possible, to refer it to some as yet unknown law. Prophecy, again, is increasingly considered as the preaching of the men of old, with only such reference to the future as there must of necessity be in the words of those who, having learnt to understand God's dealings in the present, understand also by analogy what will be His dealings under like circumstances in the future. On miracles the Church of England says nothing. Neither does she define what she means by prophecy; but, as one of the hymns of her ordinary services, we find the song of Simeon, in which the *predictive* element of prophecy is spoken of in the vaguest terms. It sings of a redemption of Israel as the fulfilment of what was spoken by the prophets of old, but it does not assert that they had foreseen details. God "hath raised up a mighty salvation for us in the house of His servant David, as He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been since the world began, *that we should be saved from our enemies*. . . . . .

To perform the oath which He sware to our forefather Abraham, that He would grant unto us, *that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve Him without fear.*"

These three are the great questions of the day; and if there be any others which occur, I assert boldly that, on all which may be an open matter between Christian men, the Church of England is equally free. In a paper like the present, I can only indicate the freedom, and not prove it exhaustively in every conceivable particular.

It is matter for sincere regret that, in some recent instances, those who could not square their views with the interpretations either of Laud or Calvin have thought it needful to endeavor to explain the modes in which it seemed to them certain words of the Church might be made looser than a plain man would read them to be. Whoever is able to sign them, or agree to them, is surely not bound to give his reasons. There are many things which are felt instinctively to be possible, which yet cannot be explained. And, certainly, in recent publications, which have been written in an earnest desire to widen the terms of communion, words have been tortured beyond their plain grammatical meaning, and elastic bonds have been strained till they burst asunder. Better would it have been to show that free thought is possible, than in some cases to endeavor to show how it is possible; better to speak of those points on which there is no definition; better to suffer the easy charge of inconsistency, than that of dishonesty, harder to bear and to refute.

But if on these so many questions the Church of England's teaching is negative, there are others on which, at least by implication, it is positive enough.

It is certain that she considers an ordered form of worship, and a systematic reading of the whole Bible, are better than prayer according to the mind of the minister alone, and the reading the Bible at choice. It is wonderful how this custom of public prayer draws a man off from his own self. He comes to church sad and downcast, and is called on to join in hymns of praise; or his heart is merry within him, and he hears the solemn petitions of the Litany. What greater proof can there be to him that "no man liveth to himself," — that "if one member rejoice, all the members rejoice with it; if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it"? The history, again, of all sects shows how prone men are to pick and choose their doctrines. It was not on critical grounds that Luther was once disposed to reject the Epistle of St. James, but because he had for a time adopted a shibboleth with which it interfered. Because their creed was bloody and their natures stern, the Covenanters of Scotland and the Puritans of the New World, and in some measure the Puritans of England, practically set aside the New Testament to regulate their conduct by the maxims, and their tongues by the phraseology, of the Old Testament. It may be that the Church of England is not absolutely free from weakness on this point, in that the prophecies of Ezekiel and the Revelation of St. John are all but ignored in her services; yet it has surely been this

general reading of the whole Bible that has kept her large-hearted and catholic, has held the balance of truth while each sect has grasped at some one portion of truth, and read the Bible accordingly; yet at the same time there is in her calendar a noble protest against Bibliolatry. There are lessons from the Apocrypha, some most unsuited to us, and which we may wish to change, yet, in adopting them at all, she admits the principle that the Canon does not contain all the teaching she would bring her children, and that God gives lessons by the mouths of men, technically speaking, uninspired. In both these points, prayer and reading, there is, however, a power of choice left the minister. It is but a few weeks since an Irish bishop spoke strongly in favor of extempore prayer before sermon, pleading for what he called the liberty of the pulpit. And by some of our greatest divines we find him anticipated. Prefixed, e. g. to some of Jeremy Taylor's sermons, we find "the prayer before sermon" in his own words, and in his highest flights of oratory, a magnificent prayer and a shorter sermon, as it were, in one. So, again, in the sermon itself, the passage of Scripture, its length and its treatment, are absolutely left to the preacher's own discretion.

Then, as to whom that prayer offered in public is addressed, the Church of England is very clear.

To God the Father, in the name of God the Son, to God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, to God as Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier, all worship is paid. Yet here, again, she is careful, except in the one rarely-used

creed, of which I have spoken, to define in no way the mysterious being of God; nor does she at other times speak metaphysically of such deep mysteries, but leaves them to be apprehended by feeling and by faith.

Again, she fences round her most sacred rites by certain solemn warnings, and once did so by outward tests, such as that of parishioners giving notice to the minister before presenting themselves at the Communion. But here the test applied, whether to the conscience alone or more formally, is one wholly moral. She does require of her members that they lead godly and Christian lives. And as far as can be gathered from her own expressions, he who lives ungodly, not he who worships the God of his fathers after a way which some call heresy, is an inconsistent member.

There is yet another question on which the Church of England gives no uncertain sound: the position in which her sons stand to the State. That none are good Churchmen who are not also good citizens, is implied in every public service, in the preface to the Prayer Book, in the Articles, and in the very fact of her existence.

One of the greatest of those who in late years have left the Church of England for the narrower pale of Rome, thinking there to find a greater freedom, endeavored, before he went, to prove that he and others might hold all Roman doctrine, and yet not go out from among us. But the liberty for which he pleaded was to be all one-sided, and therefore no true liberty. In eloquent and touching words he found fault with the formularies to which he still clung, and consoled himself for his hard

position by the thought of great men of old in one, as it seemed, not unlike his own. "Let us submit," he said, "to our imperfection as a punishment; let us go on teaching through the medium of indeterminate statements and inconsistent precedents and principles but partially developed. We are not better than our fathers: let us bear to be what Hammond was, or Andrews, or Hooker." Shall we adopt these touching words, leaving out their wail of sadness, and altering the names of the fathers? Rather let us be thankful in these our times, when "all but God is changing day by day," that our statements *are* indeterminate, our precedents of two kinds, our principles but partially developed. Let us be thankful that we have the same "liberty of prophesying" as had our great father in the faith, Bishop Jeremy Taylor, that if we are inconsistent we are so with him; let us be content to be under the same restrictions as he was, and Barrow and Hooker and Tillotson.

Yet, because we are content, we need not therefore be opposed to liturgical revision. As has been well said, "Liturgies are but temporary expressions of the Church's heart. . . . . She must go on from grace to grace, and grow from age to age, and her ancient melodies become unfitted to express her feelings." I have already indicated some not undesirable changes. I would fain see her rid of all merely human definitions of faith, —

> "Those wounding cords which bind and strain
> The heart until it bleeds."

I would alter all archaic expressions which have lost their primary meaning. I would change into intelligible English others which are a mere "tongue not understanded of the people" in our poor and uneducated parishes, such as the words in the marriage-service, "thereto I plight thee my troth." I would wish to see Christianized the very Jewish tone of that same marriage-service; and, while fixing certain prayers for all offices, would leave the minister a certain liberty of choice. At the same time we should not be keen to bring about these changes, for we see that the clamor for revision is very one-sided; and we should dread all those more deadly kinds of narrowness of heart and of faith which shelter themselves so often under a spurious liberalism. In any future revision a doubt will assuredly arise about the retention of Saints' Days, strictly so called, as distinct from Holy Days, which commemorate some event in the history of Christ Himself. And should these observances, binding now on such of the clergy as find it possible or expedient to open their churches for daily prayer, be found in any way really painful to tender consciences; if the old definition of saints which we learnt in our childhood, "holy men, whose example we pray God to be permitted to imitate," seems to be obscured, and honor paid them overmuch, then let them go, not all unregretted, but regretted far less than would be the interposition of any cloud between the Church and her Lord.

I have shown, then, that in my own opinion, and, as I believe, in that of a large number of liberal Church-

men, there is scarce a phase of Christian faith which may not be, as there is scarce one which *is* not, held within the Church of England. One difficulty which presents itself first to many minds I have reserved to the last. Wherever there are any forms and any creeds, however large, it is not possible that some shall not be excluded, or exclude themselves, who yet are members of the one Church invisible, and who shall one day be found truer Churchmen than many who are not only within the pale, but fenced round also by their own opinions. And this difficulty applies to Christanity itself. There are, we may well believe, now, as when the visible Church was tied up in Jewish swaddling-clothes, many unknown who "shall come from the east and the west, and sit down in the kingdom of God." When our eyes are opened, and the crust of error and opinion falls away, we shall find among the heathen of old, as well as among the Jews, many a Christian before Christ, many a Churchman who never heard of the Church.

We too, may, with our great poetess,

> ". . . . . believe
> In one Priest and one temple, with its floors
> Of shining jasper, gloomed at morn and eve
> By countless knees of earnest auditors;
> And crystal walls *too lucid to perceive*,
> *That none may take the measure of the place.*"

Yet, if there be a profession of a common Christianity by a nation and a state, there must of necessity be some terms of communion; and it is seemly and fitting that whatever Christian body in England is the broadest,

and includes the widest differences, should be called and considered the Church of England, though such a name is by no means coextensive with, and perhaps never can be coextensive with, the Church of Christ *in* England.

The tendency of these late years has been to abolish all *tests* of membership so far as the laity are concerned. There still remains somewhat to be done in this particular. So long as certificates of Church baptism are required, while yet the Church of England herself does not regard such baptism as essential, the members of the Church make less liberal concessions than do the forms and customs which they profess to take as their guides. So long as dissent is considered vulgar, and its adherents as men of necessarily weaker intellect than Churchmen, so long will a natural and even praiseworthy antagonism make men cling more firmly to that over which there broods even the dimmest shadow of a possible persecution.

Thus have I attempted to show, in plain words, how, in these times of change and doubt, there is room for a vast variety of opinions, and yet some firm standing-place within the limits of the Church of England, that her pretensions are by no means exclusive, nor her conditions damnatory of those who dissent from some or all of them. Should these words tend to keep within her borders one who, in search for truth, might leave her, and seek hereafter shelter in a narrower fold, despairing of true freedom; should it show one outside her that at least she does not condemn his opinions, and, indeed, offers a freer vent for them than perhaps he has else-

where found,—this tract will not have been in vain, and the presumption of writing it "for Priests and People" will stand excused. Proof has been offered of but few propositions. It would have taken too great space, and indeed is not required. For here, as in other things, "*solvitur ambulando*"; the writers of these papers are members of the Church of England; their freedom and variety of thought, their differences one with the other, are not incompatible with their hearty fellow-work, and their love for those forms which unite their discrepancies and their apparent, not real, inconsistencies.

May God grant that each Englishman, layman or priest, may remember to be very tender of the liberty of another, while he asserts his own! For a terrible Nemesis overtakes the persecutor. It should not be forgotten by those who decry liberty of thought, that one of the boldest thinkers protested but a few years since against concessions not unlike his own, though in another direction; and we, too, if we persecute, whether by word or deed, may one day need that toleration which now we refuse to others.

C. K. P.

THE MESSAGE OF THE CHURCH.

BY AN EX-DISSENTER.

Amid the upheaving of thought and opinion now going on around us, the Church of England, naturally enough, comes in for no small share of suspicion and dislike. A formidable and energetic band of earnest men has been gathered together for the specific purpose of despoiling her of her supremacy as the "Established" Church of the land. "She may continue to exist, if she chooses, as one sect among many, but she shall not continue to be in any sense the National Church, — the representative of our nation's religious life and faith. Talk as we will of her venerable antiquity, — her historic associations, — in these days of commercial activity and political turmoil, we have no time to be looking backwards, — no enthusiasm to spare for the noblest bead-roll of history, or the most venerable prestige of antiquity. Her doctrines, her practices, her institutions, may be all very good, — just as good as those of her neighbors, but no better, certainly not so much better as to warrant her riding rough-shod over all other forms of religious faith, and claiming and exercising a hateful domination over them. The grand boast of this nineteenth century is the gradual demolition of all artificial distinctions. As in the eyes of the English law all men are equal, so must all religions be equal, and the rights

of conscience must be dealt with scrupulous accuracy in equal shares to all. If the Church is really founded on a true foundation, surely she can stand without the burdensome and treacherous protection of Government. To doubt this is to deny God's power, or His will to fulfil His own promise. The advancing knowledge of political science, which has resulted in the beneficial discovery of free trade, the claims of religious liberty, the welfare of the Church itself, the reverence and faith due to God, the spiritual nature of His kingdom upon earth, all unite in demanding that the days of that Church's legal supremacy be numbered, that she be stripped of her borrowed glories, and thus become a more faithful, because more humble, servant of her great Master."

Well, be it so. I am not going to defend the Church. I have no right to arrogate such an office to myself, — no claim to be heard if I did. But what I may do, without giving offence to any I hope, is to say what message the Church has brought to my soul, and does daily bring, amid the anxieties and toils of a somewhat anxious and toilsome profession; how she helps me to live and work, to suffer and hope. I must necessarily speak of myself, at the risk of being thought egotistical. For I do feel that what we want in these days is not a theory that may look very fine on paper, or that may have the most approved orthodox ring, but an actual practical experience that may help us in the rough every-day life of this busy time.

I cannot shelter myself behind the plea of hereditary faith and educational prejudice, for I was born and edu-

cated without her pale, and only in maturer years have I deliberately imposed upon myself the "shackles of an establishment." I know well what is commonly said about the intemperate zeal of the convert. In the first burst of joy and enthusiasm with his new-found treasure, he may see glories which exist only in his own imagination, and be blind to defects which older and wiser friends mourn over and strive to remedy. I will try to resist this temptation. I owe more than I can ever repay to those Dissenters among whom my early lot was cast. The memories of holy example and precept which I have inherited from them crowd around me as I write, and make me blush to think how much better I might have been, and ought to have been. I have known many among them whom any Church might thankfully claim as her adherents, and I still number them among my most valued friends. My ecclesiastical separation has not weakened the bond of mutual friendship and esteem.

I was no half-hearted Dissenter. As the divinely-appointed representative of God's kingdom on earth, as the home of God's elect, as the special refuge from all earthly cares and anxieties, as the chosen channel of spiritual life and strength to the soul of man, — as a sacred institution, based on spiritual principles, existing for purely spiritual purposes, — the Church, I maintained, must hold herself absolutely aloof from all earthly powers and principalities. Governments, I said, are of earth, earthy, — devoid of all spiritual meaning; swayed and moulded only by motives and influences drawn from

the most earthly sources. Into the sublime region of conscience and spiritual life, the officers of such a government cannot for one moment claim admission. Union in any form, to any degree, between bodies so dissimilar in principle, in purpose, in working, is absolutely impossible. The statesman, under the mistaken idea of protecting the Church, introduces into the machinery or government an element of endless strife and ill-will, and finds himself compelled either to sacrifice the claims of the favored Church to the righteous demands of conscience, or — fearful alternative! — to trample on the sanctities of conscience and earnest religious conviction in order to preserve the Church. The Churchman who accepts such an alliance on any terms is guilty, I thought, of the veriest treason to Christ, the Church's only Head. As though he were doubtful of the Divine protection of the Church, he must fain seek the showy but dangerous protection of monarchs and statesmen; and terrible indeed is the price he must pay. He must be the advocate of despotism and tyranny; the foe of righteous government and freedom; acting in the name of the Prince of Peace, he must carry strife and cruelty into many a happy home, and seize, under the dread penalties of law, contributions that can only be accepted as the free-will offerings of loving hearts; he must abandon all claims to be a member of a spiritual society, that he may devote himself unreservedly to do the dirty work of the most worldly society.

Holding these convictions of the absolute sinfulness of an Established Church, I hailed with joy the forma-

tion of the "Anti-State Church Association," now more widely known under its new title of the "Liberation Society"; or, the "Society for the Liberation of Religion from State Patronage and Control." I looked upon the founders and promoters of that association with a reverence amounting almost to idolatry; and I must say, more truly earnest, self-denying men can rarely be found. With a straightforwardness and zeal worthy of a better cause, daunted neither by the lukewarmness and often active suspicions of friends, nor by the threats of foes, they work steadily and hopefully on. Nor do I believe they will work in vain. I believe God will make them the means of arousing the Church's life and energy; of compelling Englishmen to see on what foundation the Church is really standing; of removing the dust and rubbish which have wellnigh hidden that foundation. Depend upon it, this is daily becoming more and more *the* question for us Englishmen: "Does the Church of England stand on a good solid foundation or not? If so, what is it, — let us see it. If not, — then, away with her: Why cumbereth she the ground?" Differing as I do most widely from these men, I most devoutly thank God, that, leading me by the way which seemed best to Him, He permitted me for a time to sit at their feet, and learn what they could teach me of the Kingdom of God. They have taught me truths concerning the spiritual nature of that kingdom which I have never had to unlearn, but of which I have found the freest, fullest development in the Church of England.

It was while holding these views of the Church that I was called to wage a far fiercer conflict. The darker side of Calvinism repelled and horrified me. The "Sovereignty of God" seemed but a decent cloak to cover a worse than Asiatic despotism. I *could* not accept such a theology without doing violence to the innermost dictates of conscience and reason. Such a theology seemed to be based on a depravity which I could in no way help, and to terminate in an arbitrary will which I could in no way control. I will pass hastily over these dark passages of doubt and difficulty. I would not recall them, but that I know they did not then, they do not now, belong to me alone. Hundreds and thousands of young men are at this moment passing along that same terrible and dangerous path. When, in order not to answer, but to crush these growing doubts, the authority of the Bible was held up before me, the natural and necessary result followed. I began to doubt that authority altogether. The Bible was a grand and noble book; but I could not acknowledge it as in any sense a Revelation. Jesus Christ was one of the divinest of human beings. I could not accept Him as the Redeemer from sin and death, — the Son of God and Son of Man.

To *this* conclusion — almost the deepest depth of a negative theology — I most firmly believe I was *led by God*, not that I might remain there, but that through doubts and conflicts I might attain, under the same Divine guidance, to a higher, firmer faith. For I am bound to say, that underneath these negations, amid

many shortcomings and backslidings, there ever remained an unshaken faith in the presence and loving sympathy of God. It was because I felt my notions of the Bible and of the Saviour to interfere with this faith, that I was led to reject the authority of both. Religious controversialists, in the heat of their zeal for their recognized standards, are sadly too apt to ignore and pour contempt upon the faith which underlies and sustains these difficulties and doubts. They see the denials, but they do not, or they will not, see the truths which shine, though dimly perhaps, beneath them. They rush to redeem the Bible from attack, while they forget the love and righteousness of that God whom it is the Bible's blessed mission to declare to man. They rally with firm front around the doctrine of the Atonement, while they forget that it was the specific purpose of Him who made that atonement to reveal the name of our Father which is in Heaven. In order to vindicate the claims of the Bible, they will too often so speak as though they made light of the claims of that in us to which the Bible speaks. I speak from what I have felt of the general tone of religious controversy. Reverence for the Bible would seem, as gathered from the general tone and spirit of these controversial writings, — especially such as fill the columns of the most popular "religious newspapers," — to imply a corresponding lack of reverence for the human heart and conscience. I am bound thankfully to admit that, in the more genial and unrestrained intercourse of social and private life, I often met with a more sympathetic and kindly treatment.

I was reminded over and over again that all my doubts and denials arose from my not realizing the sinfulness of sin, — the utter depravity of the human heart. To such arguments I could only reply inwardly; that I was conscious of the awfulness and reality of sin within me, but that I was also conscious of something else, — something which was not sinful, which was ever striving against my most secret and cherished sins, which, though ever baffled and defeated by the resistance of an evil will, returned again and again to the conflict, — something which was deeper and more real than my very sins. The more painful and vivid became my consciousness of sin, the stronger — I may also add, the more painful, too — became the consciousness of this other element within me. The theology which is based on total depravity as its solitary foundation did not then, does not now, express to me the whole truth. I believe it does not meet the whole consciousness of any man. So long as I believed that that was the theology of the Bible, I could not accept it as the solution of all the problems of my daily life and thought.

The position in which I found myself placed is that in which hundreds and thousands of my fellows were, and still are, placed. Many an anxious parent is at this moment anxiously watching the career of some promising son; all the bright dreams of his future success are darkened by the dread of his imbibing these "German notions"; and many a scheme is carefully elaborated to guard him against their seductive tendency. Surely a more living trust in the fatherly care

and guidance of God would mitigate these fears. That there are many and serious dangers thrown around the path of such young men none can doubt. But I can scarcely bring myself to believe that a doubter who is really in earnest, whose one desire is to know the truth, whose daily life-prayer is that of the Psalmist, — "Lead me in Thy truth, and teach me: for Thou art the God of my salvation; on Thee do I wait all the day," — who longs to find some sure resting-place to stand on, — that such a one, whatever may be his mistakes, his failures, his conceits, will be ever forsaken by One who alone can remove all doubts by His own most blessed gift of faith. Our precautions, our arguments, our warnings, may all ignominiously fail, but God will fulfil His own purposes, and reveal Himself in His own way to the distracted spirit.

This was the turning point of my career. The hand that had led me thus far was still guiding and leading me. Those simple words of that prayer, taught by Him who knew its meaning as none else can ever know it, words which I had been taught from earliest childhood to repeat at a mother's knee, — "Our Father which art in heaven," — came home to me with a new force and meaning. I had thought that the Christian Church, if she were to retain her standing-ground at all, required something more refined, more comprehensive. I had to learn that what the Church required, what each member required, what most of all I required for my help and guidance, was to return to the simplest rudiments of our faith, and learn how fully and divinely they met all our

needs, answered to every demand of the human heart, and fitted us to fight the good fight of faith in life and death. "Our Father!"—these are simple words, unqualified and unlimited. I am not to separate myself from my fellows, and say, "*My* Father." I am not to draw any line betwen man and man, and say, "God is the Father of all men *in a certain sense*, but He is really the Father only of the converted man." I do not find the hint of any such distinctions in that prayer; I may not put them there. Nay, more, there is the most emphatic condemnation of such distinctions in the structure of the prayer itself. Though first uttered by One who knew no sin, who was Himself the object of prayer, as well as its teacher and author, still it bids me pray *as a sinner*, guilty of trespasses, ever ready to find an excuse for withholding from others that forgiveness which I daily stand in need of myself; liable to fall into temptation, and to become the slave of evil. It commands me —shall I not say He, who had taken our nature that He might redeem it from sin—He commands me "after this manner" to pray, to put myself side by side with the greatest sinner, the holiest saint, and there, one and all, as *men*, to pray, "Our Father!"

But I found I could not stop there. This prayer seemed to teach me that this relation to God as Our Father is one utterly independent of any feelings or affections of ours. "I am in very deed His child, whether I know it or not, whether I care for it or not!" I had rejected the Bible as a Divine revelation, because it seemed to teach me a dark, narrow, inhuman theology,

which I could not accept without doing violence to reason and conscience. But I was compelled to ask, Could conscience or reason ask for any revelation of God broader, more comprehensive than this? Could they of themselves supply one? And to these questions I was compelled to answer, No. I began to see that a theology which does not correspond to the deepest thoughts and feelings of human beings cannot be a true theology, but that these thoughts and feelings can never be the measure of such a theology. It must meet the human heart at all points; it must respond alike to the demands of conscience and reason; but it may, and it will, infinitely transcend them. In these words of the "Lord's Prayer" was the opening scene to my heart of this great revelation; here was the foundation on which I felt I could stand for time or for eternity.

Among the minor Popish superstitions with which I had always believed the Church of England to be disfigured was the unseemly repetition of the Lord's Prayer, one among many of the proofs of the slavish subjection of the State-bound Church to the traditions of the past. Brought into existence amid the early throes of the Reformation, rather as a political than a religious necessity, before the full clear knowledge of the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom had been attained under the Puritans and their modern representatives, that Church seemed to me a miserable, awkward compromise between Romanism and Protestantism, between ritualism and spiritualism. And, as the necessary result of her unhallowed connection with the State, she

was compelled to remain where Parliament first put her, like a huge petrification, — imposing in form, but devoid of all life and sympathy with the busy world around. What I had ridiculed as a superstition I now began to venerate as a blessed witness for an eternal truth. And I soon found that this Lord's Prayer occupied no accidental position in the Liturgy, that it cohered with all the other teaching of the Prayer-Book, shedding its divine radiance over the whole of the Church's life.

The Baptismal service, — that service to which Nonconformists have ever referred as *the* undeniable evidence of the Popish tendencies of the Anglican Church, — that service which those clergymen in the Church, technically described by the word "Evangelical," are compelled to use with silent misgivings and earnest prayers that relief from its bondage may soon be granted, — for the alteration of which an agitation has recently been attempted, — now stood forth bright and beautiful in the light reflected on it from the prayer taught by our Saviour Himself to His disciples.

The Church, I had been taught to believe, was a society of faithful men gathered out of the world, fluctuating day by day with new gains and losses or transferences from the Church on earth to that in heaven. At the solemn season of conversion we *become* members of the Church. Previous to that time, we were out of all relation to God, or to His Church; *then* we are made the children of God, we are permitted and invited to call Him "our Father." According to this view, the starting-point of life is a state of alienation from God.

The Lord's Prayer, the parable of the prodigal son, and afterwards the whole of the Bible, seemed and still seems to me to teach precisely the opposite doctrine. We *are* God's children, members of His Church, inheritors of His kingdom; and we are in this position independently of our feelings or affections, — nay, in spite of them. This is the starting-point of all life, all education, all hope for each individual man, all fellowship between men; and *this* I take to be the plain, simple, and glorious meaning of the baptismal service. The birth and education of my children have translated this doctrine out of the region of theory and opinion into that of daily life and hope. That sacred relationship which unites me to them is but the type and shadow of that deeper and more hallowed relationship uniting both them and myself to our Father. The doctrine of God the Father, and God the Son, which once seemed so hard, is now no more a doctrine, but the explanation and foundation of the family life of earth; of yours, reader — of mine — of every man's; and the doctrine of God the Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, the author and sustainer of all spiritual life among men, is the complete revelation of the Divine ground on which all created beings stand, in which they all find their one eternal centre and home. The responsibilities of fatherhood, its duties, its principles, have seemed more awful, and yet more precious, as I have stood with my own children at the baptismal font. No service of the Church, I believe, is more wonderfully calculated to raise a man above himself — above his

doubts and difficulties and contradictions — than the baptismal service; because none appeals more directly to his deepest feelings as a man, or his holiest hopes as a father; none brings home to his heart more forcibly the glorious message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; none helps him more fully to understand the meaning of these simple words, "our Father."

It may be worth while to dwell for a moment longer on these two contrasted modes of thought, lying, as they do, at the very foundation of two distinct systems, not only of theology, but of life. The one says, that at a certain crisis of life I *become* a member of God's family: the other says, that I am *already* a member of that family, and that at the crisis of conversion I return to my rightful state in the home and family of my Heavenly Father. If the former be the true representation, it is clear that my connection with God as my Father is not so close, so real, as that with our earthly parent. The Church is not a family in the same sense in which the brothers and sisters in one house are. I am the son of a certain father before I know it; I take my place in the family circle before the dawn of reason, or even of consciousness; all my associations and education assume this fact; I grow into it, and my earliest affections instinctively twine around those dear ones whose name I bear, and whose nature I share. I may become a member of a society, of a joint-stock company, of a club, but I cannot become the member of any family by any act of my own will; this place is taken for me, not by me. If, then, I am to be described as *becoming* God's child by

any act of mine, by any change in my feelings, whatever be the agency by which that change is effected, of being *admitted* into the Church by any determination of my will, my connection with God and with His Church is not, I repeat, so close, so real, as that with my earthly family. I cannot say God is my Father in the same sense in which I can claim that relationship with a human being. And it is a fact, that those Dissenters who openly object to and disavow the baptismal teaching of the Church, and that those clergymen who, though they are bound to use that service, do so with many compunctions of conscience which they are at no pains to conceal, represent God far more emphatically as a *Sovereign* than a Father. This "filial relationship," says one of the most eminent living Scotch divines, "in which we are supposed to stand simply as creatures to God as our Father," is "a relationship for which, unless it be in some very vague and figurative sense, I find no warrant, either in reason, or in conscience, or in Scripture." *

But if the doctrine of the Church of England be in very deed a faithful transcript of the Scripture revelation, then the whole aspect of our family life on earth is sanctified and hallowed, because it is seen to stand on a Divine ground, to spring from a Divine root. The numerous families of earth, each and all, find their centre in the Church, as the family of God.

It was when I had realized this baptismal teaching as

* Dr. Candlish. — Lecture at Exeter Hall, February, 1834. Published among the Lectures delivered to the Young Men's Christian Association.

the very foundation of all the Church's teaching, it was then, and not until then, that I could reconcile that conflicting consciousness respecting sin of which I have already spoken; it was then, and not until then, that I could realize the enormity and exceeding sinfulness of sin. On no point, I believe, is the popular theological teaching of the day, that of orthodox Dissenters and of Evangelical clergymen, more vitally defective than on this very question of sin. Judging from the vehemence of their denunciations, one might imagine that they could not fail to produce in the minds of their hearers the most dreadful apprehensions of its heinousness. They make sin the foundation of their whole teaching, on which alone the noble superstructure of Christian truth is to stand. "They look upon it as the violation of the decrees of an omnipotent Being who has affixed an infinite penalty to the commission of it." The Bible and the Church, I think, look upon it as the contradiction of the Divine nature; as a separation from one who is Himself love; who has acknowledged us as His children, members of His Son, inheritors of His kingdom; who has given unto us His Spirit, that we may be made daily like unto Him. The doctrine of original sin has been, and still will be, a stumbling-block to many an inquiring spirit. "It is a hard thing to think there is a 'corruption naturally engendered in the offspring of Adam,' hard, undoubtedly, because facts are hard." This surely is no new revelation. The blurred and blotted page of history, the sad and secret records of each man's consciousness, bear fearful testimony to the truth of this

statement; but the Bible and the Church explain to us those other facts of consciousness which seem to be at variance with this appalling sense of sin. They tell us that God's Spirit is ever striving within us against this sin; that though our Adam-nature is totally corrupt, there is within us something higher than that nature; that by yielding to our own nature, we are transgressing the very law of our existence; we are resisting God's Holy Spirit; we are wilfully shutting out God's light and love. Does this doctrine explain away and palliate the heinousness of sin? Does it not rather make it more real, more awful? The consciousness of every man who has not succeeded in utterly and finally quenching God's Spirit within him does bear distinct and unceasing evidence of natural corruption and depravity; but it also bears witness with equal persistency and equal clearness to the existence of something within which is not sin; something which is not his own; something — call it by what name we will — which the Church teaches us to call the gift of the Holy Spirit. She assumes that each man has received this gift, and that from that source "all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed." The teaching of the baptismal service, the claiming God as our Father, the union with Him and with His Son through the Spirit, is the one glorious principle which unites, explains, and permeates the whole Liturgy; and just because she lays this down as the fundamental fact on which all her teaching is based, her first fact of united worship in which she calls us to engage is that of confession of sin.

It is as *children*; — children who had erred and strayed from God's ways; children to whom God had given the Holy Spirit; children who had been surrounded by all the privileges and blessings of our Father's home; — it is thus that the whole congregation, priests as well as people, the highest and the lowest, the holiest and the vilest, have to unite in the solemn act of confession to their "Almighty and most merciful Father."

It is to such beings as these, erring, wayward children of a Heavenly Father, that the Life and Work of Christ, as the Incarnate God, the Son of Man, "the Lord of men, the King of their spirits, the Source of all the light which ever visited them, the Person for whom all nations longed as their real Head and Deliverer, the root of righteousness in each man," is presented. In Him all the Church's teaching finds its eternal centre, from Him all her life, the life, the hope, the strength, the grace of each individual member is derived; to Him all her prayers, her sacraments point. Perfect man, submitting to all our temptations, experiencing all our weaknesses, but overcoming all; perfect God, "dwelling in the bosom of the Father," declaring His name, and revealing His will as that of perfect Love and Righteousness; His incarnation becomes the central fact of human history, the true basis of human society, and of individual strength and holiness. In His perfect obedience to His Father's will, in His completed sacrifice of Himself on the cross, in His finished victory over sin and death and hell, is found the all-sufficient Atonement for the sins of man. His Cross

is the meeting-place between man and man, between man and God, where all middle walls of partition are broken down; and all in His name, by virtue of His atoning sacrifice, can unite in prayer and praise as the redeemed children of their Heavenly Father. Thus the Atonement is the fulfilment of the Church's Baptismal teaching, or rather, it is the Divine ground on which that teaching is based. It is by the works and words, the life and death of Jesus Christ, that we are assured that God is really our Father; it is only through the revelation of the Son that we can know the unchanging love and righteousness of the Father.

If the Church has thus taught me to look upon the family as a sacred thing, it has also taught me to look upon the Nation in a far different light from that in which I had been accustomed to view it. I began to see in the final revelation of the New Testament, not the contradiction or abrogation of the Old Testament, but rather its fulfilment and completion. By the regular and fixed lessons taken from the Old Testament, the Church has taught me to see the gradual unfoldings of God's method of government of the world, and His successive revelations of Himself. I had been accustomed to look upon Jewish history as exceptional, as a declaration of what all other history could never be. The Jewish government was theocratic. God was the revealed king and head of the nation, and this very fact was alleged in proof of the assertion, that God was king and head of no other nation. I could no longer accept this view of any part of the Bible. If that

book is in any sense a revelation, it must be the revelation, the *unveiling*, of that which is eternally true; if it is a revelation of God, I must suppose it is meant to teach me what God actually is, and how He governs the world, and "orders the unruly wills and affections of sinful men." The Jewish history and polity seemed to be the explanation of all other history, the unveiling of God, as the source and root of all national life and unity, by whom alone all "kings reign, and princes decree justice." This history has taught me that my national and civil life is a holy thing; that they who are appointed to govern are so appointed as God's ministers and servants; that the nation and the Church are indissolubly united according to God's eternal law; the nation acknowledging her Divine standing-ground in the Church, the Church embracing, sustaining, hallowing the nation. It is not surprising to find that Dissenters, who denounce a State-Church as an ungodly thing, should neglect, as they do, the connected historic teaching of the Old Testament. Let me not be misunderstood. Many valuable lessons of high spiritual significance, many precious foreshadowings of our Saviour's work and mission, are constantly drawn from that varied treasure-house; but its lessons, as forming a regular, complete history, as an integral part of God's revelation of Himself, are practically ignored. The Mosaic dispensation is a "carnal" one, destined to be obliterated by the brighter glories of the spiritual dispensation of the Gospel. A religious establishment was a part of that carnal dispensation; it is an eyesore and

a blasphemy in the freer dispensation of the Spirit. I confess the Church has not taught me thus to understand the Old Testament; or if she had, the most natural comment on her teachings would have been, to burn it, as a useless, even a dangerous, book, setting before us principles which it is dangerous to believe, and examples which it is criminal to follow. I have learnt, alike from Dissenting teaching and from the Church, that its types and shadows are abolished by the Incarnation of the Son of God, the fulfilment of all types, the realization of all shadows; but I have still to learn that the very principle on which the Jewish nation and government was based, the recognition of God as the source and centre of all authority and power, the very principle which that nation and government was designed to teach to all men and nations, has been rendered useless and dangerous by any subsequent revelation. Are we, in this nineteenth century, to learn the sad and humiliating lesson, that national life is a life without God; that governments and rulers have nothing to do with the King of kings, nor He with them; that all they have to do is to obey those dictates of the popular will which for the moment happen to be proclaimed with the most noisy persistence; that all questions of right and truth are beyond their jurisdiction; that the Sovereign People is their highest, their only God? Are we now to learn — not from German neologians and philosophers, but from practical orthodox Englishmen — that all which the Old Testament says about God as the Head and King of the Jewish nation is not true in

any sense of the English nation? Can this be the result of the agitations and heart-burnings of the last thirty years, that nations may rise and fall by force or fraud, as they are only of the earth, earthy; that a national religion is an absurdity; that to attempt in any way to connect our national life with God's kingdom on earth is a violation of liberty, an insult to truth, and a blasphemy against God?

If I thus discarded my Anti-State-Church teaching respecting the State, because it was so fearfully negative, I soon found that, much as I had learned from it of the sacredness of the Church, I was in reality still further removed from my teachers on the other side of the question, as to the meaning and nature of the Church.

The Church, I was told, was a society taken out of the world especially by God, — a society of believers, — a society whose members were penetrated and guided by God's spirit; this society was the representative of God's kingdom upon earth. This, indeed, sounds well; but practically the society is split up into innumerable divisions, — each distinguished by a set of opinions more or less clearly defined; these opinions are the real badge of separation from the world and from one another. Each new opinion, as it becomes more distinct and more clearly defined, becomes the foundation of a new sect, each sect claiming the title of "Church." I am far, very far, from wishing to imply that the religion of Dissenters is a religion of opinions merely. I believe that there are numbers of them, — numbers far greater than their most sanguine advocates could ever dare to

hope, — of whom it will be found that their life has indeed "been hid with Christ in God," — that faith in the Son of God has been their stay, their hope, their life. But the position and existence of each sect is determined by opinions, and opinions only. These opinions are the test of admission to their communion, the bond which binds the different members of the body together in one "denomination." The assumption which lies at the root of all this teaching, and which has come out with marked prominence in the Anti-State-Church controversy, is this, — that "Religion is simply and solely a matter between a man's soul and God." Against this assumption, as a Churchman, I am bound most earnestly to protest, as a weak and miserable exhibition of what the Gospel has done and is designed to do for man. Religion — especially the Christian religion — has to do with every element of any life. And how much of that life is really and strictly individual? how much belongs to myself alone? I was the member of a certain family; I had entered into the relations of son and brother before I was capable of thought; each new step in life has brought me into some new relationship: just as my life has become deeper and fuller, it has become less individual. Am I to say that my Christian profession inverts all this; that it proceeds on a totally different principle; that it claims directly only that part of me which belongs to myself alone, and influences only indirectly that far deeper part of me which binds me to the men around? On this point the Church speaks out with no doubtful or faltering tone. In that

solemn baptismal rite in which we were made members of Christ, we were also made members one of another. With all our diverse and often opposing sentiments and opinions, still all are members of the one Divine family; all unite in the worship of the One Common Father; all approach Him through the One Elder Brother; all are sealed by the One Spirit; all washed by the waters of one baptismal tide; all invited to unite in one Holy Communion. In this highest act of earthly service, that which is most universal is found to be most individual: here, where the Church excludes none, save those who have excluded themselves, where all are invited to come, each communicant is reminded most solemnly of his individual responsibilities as a member of the universal Church. I have said that opinions about God the Father, or about His Son Jesus Christ, or about the Holy Spirit, or about some Christian doctrine, are the tests of admission to communion among the various Dissenting bodies. For instance, in many "churches" of the Baptist denomination, no man, however holy his life, can be admitted to the "Lord's Table," unless he holds certain views about the mode of baptism, and about its limitation to adults. The Church invites all to partake of the eucharistic feast who are willing to acknowledge God as their Father; who, though conscious of "manifold sins and wickedness, which they from time to time most grievously have committed," rest in the finished Atonement of His Son; who believe that God's Holy Spirit has really been given to them to enable them to overcome the world, the flesh, and the Devil. Though,

as a layman, I have not been called upon to express any formal belief in the Articles, yet I cannot be too thankful for the protection which the twenty-sixth Article affords me against the narrowness, the prejudices, the moral unfitness of the administering priest: "Although in the visible Church the evil be ever mingled with the good, and sometimes the evil have chief authority in the ministration of the Word and Sacraments, yet forasmuch as they do not the same in their own name, but in Christ's, and do minister by His commission and authority, we may use their minstry both in hearing the Word of God, and in receiving of the Sacraments. Neither is the effect of Christ's ordinance taken away by their wickedness, nor the grace of God's gifts diminished from such as by faith and rightly do receive the Sacraments ministered unto them: which be effectual, because of Christ's institution and promise, although they be ministered by evil men."

The Sacraments of Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper owe all their deep significance, their life-giving power, only to Him who is their centre and ground, — Jesus Christ. No clergyman has the right or power to impose any convictions or prejudices of his between the communicant and the Church's ever-living Head. The creed which bids us believe in God the Father Almighty, in His only Son Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost, is our deliverance from the fleeting forms and traditions of human opinion, — the deliverance from the sectarian passions and bigotries of our own hearts.

Many hearts are now crying out for a broader, more

comprehensive Church. Is not the narrowness, the exclusiveness, of which they complain so bitterly, the reflection of their own confused misapprehensions and dark notions of the Church, and of her glorious message? She speaks to me as a human being, as the member of a family, of a nation; she speaks to me as burdened with the consciousness of sin, and as no less burdened with the haunting, often crushing conviction that I was meant to be something far different from that; as possessed of a power to resist and overcome sin,—of a power not my own, which, the moment I claim it for myself, slips from my grasp; she tells me that God Himself is seeking me; that He has sent His only-begotten Son to take my nature, to die for me,—to go down into the dark grave, to grapple with the foes who were claiming me as their own, and to overcome them, and to claim me as His own, to be my Lord and King; that He has given me His blessed Spirit to dwell in me, the source of all righteousness, the bond of all fellowship, the guide of my understanding, the strength of my life. What message can be broader, more comprehensive, and yet more searching, more humbling, more distinctively Christian, than this? Can rationalism, can the latest and most approved form of German or English neology, give us any message better than this? Nay, is it not this for which all earnest rationalism is but the confused cry? We may refute it over and over again; we may denounce it; religious newspapers may trace it in its faintest embryo, and seek to crush it ere it is ushered into life; we may expose its arrogance, unmask its

sophisms, draw its premises to their logical conclusions, and then hold them up in horror; but we cannot drive it out of human hearts, except by pointing them to Him for whom they are seeking. We may use the Bible as an armory of texts, of which we can avail ourselves with unexampled dexterity, and draw them forth to hurl at our foes; but never, by this method, shall we turn our foes into friends, — never shall we teach them to see and feel how blessed and glorious, how fitted for human hearts, the revelation of that Bible is. What our arguments and denunciations cannot do, I believe the simple, earnest, hearty deliverance of the Church's message will effect. Taking our stand upon her practice, listening to and believing the message she brings to us in the different stages and circumstances of life, beginning with the baptismal font, and ending in this world by the dying bed and the open grave, I believe we may meet Rationalists on the one hand, and Dissenters on the other, and invite all in God's name to unite in one Christian home, in one Common Prayer, in one Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.

But there is still another class, larger than either that of Rationalists or Dissenters, to which the Church's message has been, and may still, be brought home with Divine power, — the great outlying world around, — the poor, the outcast, the negligent, — the men immersed in money-getting, the women to whom life is all one everlasting round of fashion and frivolity.

The Church, as I have said, speaking from my own experience, has taught me to look upon family, social,

and national life as sacred institutions, each finding their centre in God. These various relations of life belong equally to the most worldly as to the most saint-like men. What, then, is the distinction between the Church and the world? "The world contains the elements of which the Church is composed. In the Church these elements are penetrated by a uniting, reconciling power. The Church is, therefore, human society in its normal state; the world, that same society irregular and abnormal. The world is the Church without God; the Church is the world restored to its relation with God, taken back by Him into the state for which He created it."

Of course, to those who, whether in the Church, or openly dissenting from her, reject her baptismal teaching, who maintain that it is a "soul-destroying delusion" to believe that baptized children have received the Holy Spirit, who address mankind generally as in a state of alienation from God, this representation of the distinction between the Church and the world seems very unsatisfactory, very mystical, very unsound. They make the Church the separate exclusive element; they describe men as leaving the world, and joining themselves to a separate and distinct society; and thus becoming members of God's Church, and entitled to call Him Father. The convert thus coming out of the world takes up entirely a new position, one which did not in any way belong to him as a man, or as a member of a family. His earthly relationships are simply of the earth, earthy; they are no integral part of the new Christian position which he has been led to assume;

they have nothing to do with him specifically as a believer. Of course, as an earnest Christian, he will do all he can to influence those around him, to bring them to the foot of that same cross at which he has found pardon and peace; but his position as a member of a Christian Church has nothing to do with his position as a member of a family or a nation. The latter class of relationships belong to the dispensation of nature, the former to the dispensation of grace; the latter belong to him as a man, the former belong to him as a Christian. Henceforth his life must run as it were in two parallel directions, — the human, with all the claims of home, country, kindred, friends; the spiritual, with all the hopes, the conflicts, the joys, the fears, involved in the Christian life; the human centring in and resting upon earth, the spiritual centring in and resting upon God. Seeing how deep and heroic a faith often springs out of this representation of the relation of the Church and world, it were hard indeed to deny that there must be in it some truth, some power of moulding the heart. But receiving as the very foundation of all hope for the life that now is, and for that which is to come, the baptismal teaching of the Church of England; believing it a glorious truth, which I must cling to, despite of all the waywardness and contradictions of my own heart — despite all the misrepresentations and denunciations of Churchmen and Dissenters — that I have actually received the gift of God's Spirit, that every baptized child has received that precious gift; I cannot find any rest for my spirit in any Church which stands so related, or

rather, should I not say, *unrelated*, to my whole human life. And sure I am that *this* statement of the contrast between the Church and the world has caused, and still continues to cause, no small amount of disquiet to many hearts. It is a terrible thing to have to learn that the bond which binds us to one another in the same household is only an earthly one; it is a difficult thing to learn that the bond which binds us to the members of the same Church is more sacred, more spiritual, than that which binds us to our own brothers and sisters, or to our children. The bond that binds the different members of a Church together, is a bond of opinion. So long as our opinions agree, we remain members of the same Church. We are members of an Independent or a Baptist Church, or a Wesleyan Society, according to the varying complexion of our opinions or the determinations of our wills. The bond that binds the different members of a family together rests on a far deeper, — can I resist saying? — more sacred foundation. I thank God that it is hard, terrible, impossible ever to learn these lessons, — to learn that a Church thus constituted is more sacred than the solemn ties of home and family.

We hear much in the present day of the "equality of all religions," as one of the blessed and desirable consummations towards which the advancing growth of democracy is slowly but surely conducting us. We are asked in the name of religious liberty to aid in bringing about this equality. By equality of religions, we are to understand equality of religious opinions; and we are

asked if it is just that one set of opinions about episcopacy, about the use of liturgies, about the sacraments, or saints' days, should have and enjoy any favor or pre-eminence over another. If this really were the question, no man, however great his love for the Church, could, I think, hesitate to swell the cry. But this is *not* the question. Under the plausible pretext of liberty and equality, we are asked to destroy that Church which alone bears witness to the sacredness of our whole life. We are asked to destroy that platform — the revelation of God as the Head and King of the nation, as the Guide and Teacher, the Redeemer and Sanctifier of each individual man — on which alone national unity and liberty can stand. We are asked to make our Christian religion no longer the acceptance of a Divine revelation to us; but the transcript, the ever-varying and confused transcript, of each man's changing feelings and opinions about that revelation. From such liberty and equality my prayer shall ever be, "Good Lord, deliver this beloved England of ours."

Every baptized child is required, previous to confirmation, to learn the catechism, in which he is taught to say that "he heartily thanks his Heavenly Father that He hath called him to this state of salvation, through Jesus Christ his Saviour: and he prays unto God to give him His grace, that he may continue in the same unto his life's end." To be a Christian, then, according to the Church's teaching, is to be in the right state for which each man was created. It is not the adoption of a new position, nor of new opinions, but simply believing, not

with his lips only, but with the whole energy of his life and heart, that God has really given him His Spirit, that He has really redeemed him by His Son, that He is really the ground and centre of every relationship of his human life, the inspirer of all holy resolutions, the source of all spiritual strength, for weal or woe, for life or death. As a man of the world, he enters into various relationships and duties; as a Christian, he recognizes and adores God as the ground and centre of each one. As a man of the world, self is the great end of life; as a Christian, God is the great end. The Christian stands on no new ground, in no new position; he sees how Divine is the ground on which he is already standing; how solemn and sublime the position which he already occupies. It is at the hour of his conversion, when first he turns with sin-stricken conscience and bleeding heart to his Father and God, that he learns the true sanctity of family and national life: the same message which brings peace to his troubled spirit as a sinner, also gives him new joy and hope as a man, a citizen, a father.

I have spoken of the "darker side of Calvinism" as repelling and horrifying me in days long gone past. The Church has taught me to see the blessed truth underlying the darkest and dreariest representations of Calvinism, — that truth expressed in the words of our Saviour, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." Most assuredly the Church teaches her members, by every prayer in her Liturgy, by every confession, by every song of thanksgiving and praise, by every act of

Holy Communion, to refer all the good that is in them, all their wisdom, all their righteousness, to the Father of Lights, the God of all grace. She bids us refer everything to the Divine Will; but she has proclaimed that Will to be the Will of a Loving Father, who is ever seeking us; who imparts His Spirit unto us even before the dawn of consciousness or reason; and not the Will of an arbitrary sovereign. The proclamation of the Divine Fatherhood precedes and explains the proclamation of the Divine Sovereignty.

Such has been the Church's message to my heart, — such is the message, I believe, to thousands of hearts in this land, — a message not borne to me in the witching accents of some popular preacher, but in the Creeds, the Common Prayer, the Baptismal and Communion offices of the Church itself. I know too well how this message is ofttimes darkened by the confused utterances of her priests, by the misunderstandings and dissensions of her people, — above all, by the darkness, the waywardness of my own heart; but I pray God that all the religious agitations of the present day, — the movements to and fro, — the sounds of war and strife in her midst, — the onward march of her foes, with liberty and equality inscribed on their standard, while seeking to destroy the divinest witness in the nation to our true liberty and equality as God's redeemed children, — that all these circumstances may arouse her priests to deliver that message with more unfaltering earnestness, and our people to accept it with more zealous and self-denying sympathy. Dark days may, in God's Providence, be in store

for that Church. Her foes may be permitted to succeed in impairing her privileges, in diminishing her resources; those within her fold who sympathize least with that part of her teaching which is most distinctive, and therefore most universal, may weaken the faith of some in the teachings of her Prayer-Book; but I firmly believe that God will turn all these trials into blessings, if with unshaken confidence we trust in Him; if our hope, our prayer, is ever directed to Him, to Whom we have been taught, first by His own Son, and through all succeeding ages by His Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, by her offices and Sacraments, to pray, "Our Father which art in Heaven."

VI.

THE SERMON OF THE BISHOP OF OXFORD ON REVELATION,

AND THE LAYMAN'S ANSWER.

I. A DIALOGUE ON DOUBT.

By J. M. LUDLOW.

II. MORALITY AND DIVINITY.

By the Rev. F. D. MAURICE,

INCUMBENT OF ST. PETER'S, VERE STREET, ST. MARYLEBONE.

VI.

I.

A DIALOGUE ON DOUBT.

By J. M. Ludlow.*

Interlocutors: — Grey (*a safe man*).
Williams (*a plain-speaking man*).

G. I hear, Mr. Williams, you have been taking some pains towards getting that poor fellow Smith out of his present slough of infidelity. Do you think you have produced any effect upon him?

W. I cannot say.

G. Ah! I thought not. When once such doubts as his come in and are entertained, there is very little hope from argument.

W. I quite agree with you. Argument very, very seldom changes a man's mind. Still, there are many minds that require argument, not to change them, but to enable them to change themselves, or rather to admit change into themselves. They run away with the notion that all the argument is on one side, — i. e. against religion, — and it is only by seeing that there is just as

* This dialogue was originally intended by the author to be the third of a series of tracts. It was thought advisable, however, rather to publish it in its present connection.

much argument on the other side, that they become capable of rising above argument, and surrendering themselves to a higher teaching, which otherwise they would have spurned at.

G. I am afraid the only chance is to fling doubt from one at its first entrance, as the Bishop of Oxford says, like a loaded shell. By the way, have you read his "Two Sermons preached before the University of Oxford," in which the striking image I have referred to occurs? That is the true way to deal with doubters.

W. The true way, certainly, to make faith easy to those who only need it as a pillow to sleep on; but a very false way to meet a single honest doubt in a single honest mind.

G. Mr. Williams! I am astonished ——

W. Come, Mr. Grey, — do you think that any man fit to be called a man could ever be worked upon for any good purpose by that highly-wrought picture of the doubter's death? *

G. What can be more impressive?

W. Is there not many an equally impressive, and almost entirely analogous passage, in the discourses of Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite? †

* "The Revelation of God the Probation of Man," by Samuel, Lord Bishop of Oxford; see p. 35.

† E. g. "Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine; the light shall be dark in his tabernacle, and his candle shall be put out with him. The steps of his strength shall be straitened, and his own counsel shall cast him down; for he is cast into a net by his own feet, and he walketh upon a snare. . . . . Terrors shall make him

G. Surely you don't mean to compare the Bishop of Oxford ——

W. I do mean to say that the style of pleading adopted, I will not say in the first, but in the second of the sermons you refer to, is exactly the same as that of those three friends of Job, against whom God's wrath was kindled, because they had not spoken of Him the thing that was right, as His servant Job had. There is the same hardness and want of sympathy with one of the most acute, I would almost say the most sacred of human miseries; the same use of threats and bullying to crush struggles which need rather the tenderest help.

G. You cannot speak seriously.

W. I do speak most seriously and deliberately. You must erase the Book of Job from the Bible, and the remembrance of it from human speech, before you can prove that the honest doubts of a man are to be quelled by any means short of that of raising his troubled spirit into the higher sphere of a wisdom and justice and power in which he and all the universe lie folded.

G. What do you mean by "honest doubt"? Surely you cannot intend that a man should cherish every crotchet that comes into his head, and think himself a Job for his pains?

W. By honest doubt I mean simply the sincere struggling of a mind for the truth, even when that truth

afraid on every side, and shall drive him to his feet. . . . . His confidence shall be rooted out of his tabernacle, and it shall bring him to the king of terrors. . . . . He shall be driven from light into darkness, and chased out of the world." — JOB xviii. 5, and following.

seems to come to it in the most portentous form. Nor will that struggle, if sincere, ever be one for a mere intellectual, but for a moral truth. Honest doubt is, in short, at bottom, moral doubt, — not doubt respecting the certain or uncertain, but doubt respecting good and evil. That was the doubt of Job, the doubt of David, the doubt of Jeremiah, the doubt of almost every one of the heroes of the Old Testament. That doubt, — which, I say, is a sacred agony of man's nature, — though ordained bishops and ranting itinerants may rail at it and bid us with threats to drive it out, the Scripture all through treats with the utmost tenderness, never attempts to terrify it, but only meets it with a fuller revelation of God's nature and His counsels.

G. Of course there is doubt and doubt. The Bishop of Oxford himself speaks of those doubts which, "instead of being the resource of evil, are the trouble of holy souls"; which, "whether the result of a peculiar constitution of body or of mind, or the fruit of an unhappy training, or the bitter consequences of past sin, rise unbidden," and "need the tenderest care, and the wisest and most loving discipline."

W. I deny altogether that the doubt I speak of is either "the result of a peculiar constitution," or "the fruit of an unhappy training," or "the bitter consequence of past sin." I say distinctly it is an agony of human nature, in its noblest, most typical embodiments. Take Job, take Asaph,* take Jeremiah,† where will

* See Psalms lxxiii., lxxiv., lxxvii., lxxix., lxxxii.

† See Chapters xii., xiv., xv., xx., or Lam. iii.

you find men more devoid of "peculiarities," less warped by "unhappy training," less polluted by "past sin"? Take David, and see whether the psalms through which that feeling rings are not precisely those which are freest from the burden of remembered sin.*

G. But do you mean to say that doubt is not in its nature sinful?

W. Wilful doubt of course is, — I mean the raking up of questions in one's own mind as to whether good is good, and evil evil; whether truth is truth, and falsehood falsehood. But the doubt which is forced upon us by the weight and pressure of the outward contradictions of this fallen world, — the whole Bible, I say, declares that that doubt is no sin, but the trial by fire of God's own children. They may look back upon it as "foolishness" or "ignorance" when once freed from it, but they only free themselves from it by facing it, and going into the "sanctuary of God" to wrestle it off.

G. It may be that in the dim light of the older economy such doubts as you speak of were not accounted to sin in the holy men whom the Bible speaks of; but in the full light of the Christian dispensation surely it must be otherwise.

W. Nay. You must take down the cross from Calvary before you can convict earnest doubt of sin. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" — such is its final consecration. He who was tempted in all things like as we are, yet without sin, endured it, and that holy agony is bound up forever with the very fulfilment

* See for instance, Psalms x., xliv.

of man's salvation. When we can once enter into the reality of that awful mystery, the Son of God, for man's sake, doubting God Himself, we shall feel that to try to stifle doubt by death-bed terrors is to crucify the Lord afresh.

G. You must be aware that very different interpretations have been put on the mysterious words you refer to.

W. I am aware of it. No man who starts by treating doubt as sin can ever dare to realize those words in their awful fulness and simplicity. No candid child can ever take them in any other sense than that awfully simple one. So read, they are but the crowning anguish of that inward Passion of doubt, if I may so call it, that hidden struggle which must have accompanied our Lord's whole work upon earth, into which the Scripture only affords to us a few glimpses, according to the various stages of its development; first, the doubt respecting His own mission, as exemplified through the temptation in the wilderness; next, the doubt as to His own capacity to fulfil that mission, first clearly exhibited in the answer to Andrew and Philip as the spokesmen of the Greeks;* then unveiled in all its terror in the various narratives of the struggle in Gethsemane; lastly, the doubt beyond which there is nothing, that doubt on the cross as to there being any help for Him in God.

G. It is quite impossible for me to follow you in such speculations. They seem to me to run directly in the

* John xii. 27.

teeth of St. Paul's saying, that "whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

W. But the doubt I am referring to is full of faith. It is precisely that doubt which justifies the golden lines of our poet, —

> "There lives more faith in honest doubt,
> Believe me, than in half the creeds."

The fact is, honest doubt is impossible without faith. Why is it that though Job had darkened counsel by words without knowledge, yet he had spoken of God the thing that was right, which his three friends had not? Why, but because through all his most passionate pleadings against God's seeming injustice there runs nevertheless a rooted ineradicable faith that He must be just, that the Judge of all the earth must do right? That it is precisely which gives him, and Jeremiah, and David, and Asaph, such courage to plead with God, to fling, so to speak, in His face the contradictions of life, the riddles of the universe, to upbraid Him, as it were, with what they feel at the time as His desertion of them. "Righteous art Thou, O Lord, when I plead with Thee, yet let me talk with Thee of Thy judgments: Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper?" — such, to use the words of Jeremiah, is their constant controversy. They know very well that He, the God of truth, will not punish them or be wroth with them for thus struggling to reach the truth of what seems a fearful and bewildering lie. And so that supreme doubt on the cross is equally at bottom but a cry of the deepest faith. It witnesses to earth and heaven, to all time and to all

eternity, that there is a God, and that this God is One who belongs to the most apparently deserted sufferer, who is his own, to whom he can always cry, "My God, my God." It witnesses that that God is just, and One whose nature forbids Him to forsake the sufferer, else would the sufferer not cry to Him that he is forsaken. It witnesses that in the depths of His counsel alone is hidden the cause of suffering, else would the sufferer cry to some other his torturing why.

G. Once more; I do not pretend to follow you in your present path. But you must allow me to warn you, that there is already far too much doubt in the world, without your encouraging it by a sort of canonization.

W. So far from thinking that there is too much doubt — of the kind I am speaking of, honest, earnest, righteous doubt — in the world, I don't think there is half enough.

G. Why, I have heard you lament yourself the absence of positive faith amongst our young men.

W. Certainly; the absence of positive faith and of righteous doubt are exactly correlative; they are twin symptoms of the same decadence. I hardly know one young man who has strength and courage enough for righteous doubt. There is plenty of indifference, plenty of denial, plenty of cool passing by of whatever cannot be understood, plenty of complacent setting up or adoption of new philosophical theories, but of the resolute struggle for truth very little. Perhaps it has been undergone once on some subordinate point, and the result

having been that the truth has been found to dwell outside of some preconceived opinion, the conclusion has been come to that it dwells, probably, outside of all received opinions, and that from the moment one has left these, anything that looks like truth may very likely be true, so that it is no longer worth struggling with. If Comte or Renan, or any other of our ruling philosophers, had had half the courage to doubt their own systems, as they probably have had to doubt the systems in which they had been brought up, how different would be the result of their labors!

G. Then, according to you, the prevalent evil of the age is not doubt?

W. I hold it to be rather the prevalence and multiplication of all manner of lazy beliefs in the easily credible; or, again, in either the credible or incredible, so long as neither makes much demand on men's hearts and conduct. The state of mind, I take it, which is thus shown, is one closely analogous to that which was exhibited in the multiplication of gods at and after the Christian era, when all received beliefs sat loosely on men, and they were always ready to receive new ones with the old, or instead of them, so long as the change required was one of formulas or ceremonies only, and not of the life itself. In such a state of mind a setter up of a new philosophy, as of old the setter forth of strange gods, is sure of a curious hearing. He who simply seeks to unveil the name, and nature, and purpose, and will of the Unknown God and Father, is treated as a mere babbler.

G. And what do you think will all this lead to?

W. I think the issue must be precisely the same in the nineteenth, and probably the next century, as it was in the first and following centuries, — the fall of all the new philosophic idols, as of the old religious ones, before One whose name is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

II.

MORALITY AND DIVINITY.

By the Rev. F. D. Maurice.

A pamphlet appeared about two months ago in Oxford, bearing this title: — *The Suppression of Doubt is not Faith. A Letter to the Bishop of Oxford on his two Sermons, entitled,* "The Revelation of God the Probation of Man." *By a Layman.* The subject is one of permanent interest. The author criticised is the most eloquent of modern divines. The critic represents a widely diffused lay feeling. Pamphlets have appeared in answer to the Layman. He has rejoined. The controversy, which has risen out of that concerning the "Essays and Reviews," may continue when they are forgotten.

Upon the main question — the innocence or sinfulness of doubt — I shall not enter at present. A subordinate question, which is inseparable from it, and is not less important, is suggested in the following passage.

"The present crisis is, no doubt, a dangerous one. It owes its dangerous character mainly to the injurious action of the Established Church in checking the course of opinion, which, if left to itself, would flow quietly and calmly, but which, when dammed up, acquires unnatural force and fury. Yet the state of affairs is not quite so bad as your Lordship seems to suppose. The

agony of alarm which thrills through your Sermons arises, I trust, from an exaggerated view of the peril, — not, perhaps, as it affects the Anglican Episcopate, but as it affects the mass of Christians. I wish you were in a position to see and admit that the 'creeds and confessions drawn up by men,' the 'Church's terminology,' and the 'authoritative declarations of the faith,' whether they or any of them be true or false, stand on a very different footing from the Christianity which was delivered to the hearers of the Sermon on the Mount. I think it too probable that very different inferences from those which you desire to suggest will be drawn by independent minds as to all the parts of our religion to which your warnings and denunciations apply, and I am therefore anxious that the range of their application should not be unduly enlarged. You are a Bishop, and are bound to maintain all that a dogmatic Church declares, by her authority, to be matter of faith. I am a Layman, and shall be content to preserve the religious truth by which we live. The inevitable effect of your language, as it appears to me, will be to taint with the deepest suspicion every article of our belief, into which you would scare us from inquiring. I fear this suspicion will fall unjustly on some matters which, if fairly inquired into, will bear the inquiry well."

It is intimated in this passage, that the Christianity which was delivered to the hearers of "the Sermon on the Mount," will bear inquiry far better, and is a much more real and comprehensive bond of communion, than the Creeds and Confessions which our Church has

adopted. This is "the religious truth by which" laymen "live." The others concern the "Established Church" and the Anglican Episcopate.

This sentiment is one which Clergymen ought thoroughly to understand and deeply to ponder. They can easily dismiss it by saying, "We have heard all that before." No doubt they may have heard it any time during the last 160 years. The doctrine to which the Layman has given utterance was more prevalent in the middle of the last century than it has been in our century. The Evangelical movements in the Church and among the Dissenters, the political crisis at the end of the last age, various dogmatic tendencies in this, produced for some time a reaction against it. But there must be some reason for its reappearance. The writer who has just adopted it is not the least inclined to be a repeater of bygone notions and objections. He connects his opinions with the most recent phases of religious thought among us. We ought to find out why he does so. He may not convince us that he is right; he may show us where we have been wrong.

I. "The Christianity which was delivered to those who heard the Sermon on the Mount." I am sure the Layman does not intend that to remain a vague phrase. He is proposing a substitute for inventions of ours. He goes back to a Divine ground. He dislikes loose and rhetorical phrases. He would have us consider seriously what this Christianity is; what the words of Him who spoke with "authority, and not as the Scribes," really were.

Let us take His last words first; none are more weighty; none set forth better the spirit of the whole discourse.

"*Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it. And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine.*"

We know from these sentences that He from whom this Christianity proceeded means it to be done, not talked about. It must enter into the whole life of a man and a society. It must govern the whole life of a man and a society. The Layman speaks of "the religious truth by which we live." This is the religious truth by which we live: the announcement that any foundation which will not support acts that are in conformity with Christ's words is a sandy and false foundation. The Clergy should thank the Layman for reminding them of this. We must all know for ourselves how terrible the temptation is to forget it. The habit of talking to others, of setting before them great duties, of telling them that, if they are Christians, they ought to perform them, — who is not aware of the

peril to our own sincerity in this! He is a true lay preacher who tells us that the religious truth by which we live, demands of us the actual fulfilment of Christ's commands.

In the beginning of the chapter which is concluded by these tremendous sentences, we have some of the words which must be not only heard, but done.

"*Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye. Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they should trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.*"

These, surely, are not words which have passed away. *They* do not belong to the myths which a refined criticism eliminates from the Gospel. *They* cannot be thought to have a fitness for earlier days which they have not for ours. They strike at the very heart of the acts which procure us most credit among our fellows, which make us most pleased with ourselves. Judge not! Why, judging is the very business of our lives, the main function of our Christianity! What are we all doing, High-Churchmen, Low-Churchmen, Broad-

Churchmen, but passing judgment upon one another? We are very tolerant, no doubt, some of us. But what a cheering exercise it is to find some one else out in intolerance. So that the transgression of the command which issues with such awfulness from the mouth of our King, which is connected with the tremendous expression, "Thou hypocrite," has become habitual to us. Every sect, every school, is encouraged by its religious organ to discover any fault that can be found in every sect and school except its own; to think that all virtues and graces are to be found in itself. And this spirit which is exhibited in those organs is diffused through our whole religious society. After we have complained bitterly of it in others, we find that we are nursing it in our own hearts. We are angry because it touches us and our friends. We take the privilege of indulging it because we have suffered from it. What tremendous satire does the Layman indulge in when he tells us that this is the religious truth by which we live! But may it not be most salutary satire? May it not induce us to inquire how it has come to pass, that we are so little doing the acts which our Lord says we must do if our houses are not to fall and crush us?

Some words occur at an earlier part of the Sermon to which I would refer, because they have led Professor Jowett to adopt an opinion which is precisely the reverse of the Layman's.

"*Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.*" What a justification is here for the notion that the Sermon on the Mount gathers together certain

"counsels of perfection," upon which saintly souls may form themselves, but which have no application to the world at large! I own for myself, that *but* for those words I should have been tempted — or rather forced — to agree with Professor Jowett; those words enable me to retain the older and simpler sentiment of the Layman, that we have in this Sermon the universal human morality by which every age and every nation should live. When I read those other passages which I have quoted, without these, and compare them with my own practice and with the practice of my times, they drive me very nearly to despair. I feel them to be profoundly, infinitely true; I feel them to be the truth which we most want, without which I do not see there can be anything but an ever-growing discord and hatred among us, — a hatred between sects, schools, classes, individuals, — which will break through all seeming disguises and affectations, and will rend the commonwealth asunder. And yet I feel that the mere possession of the rules, so far from enabling me to keep them, is a perpetual witness against me that I do not keep them, — a perpetual sore and torment to my conscience if I pretend that I am keeping them. It is only when I learn from this verse of the Sermon, and from the whole tenor of it, that there is a Father in heaven who is perfect charity and love; who, because He is that, sends His rains upon the just and the unjust, the good and the evil; who, because He is that, wishes to make us after His image; it is only then that I can see any light through this darkness; it is only then that I know I may arise and go to this Father, and tell Him

how I have sinned against His children and Him; it is only then I can believe in the possibility of repentance and reformation for myself, for my country, for the Church.

And as I have been led back by this consideration from the very natural and very sincere dogma of Professor Jowett to the older and manlier creed of the Layman, so I have been led still further to ask myself whether, admitting the interests of practical morality to be paramount to all others, I may not, for the sake of those interests, be wiser to hold fast by the ancient creeds which the Layman regards as a heavy burden, than to substitute for them a formal acknowledgment of the "Christianity which was delivered to those who heard the Sermon on the Mount."

The main reason for preferring the latter to the former is obviously this, that what is human, and bears directly upon human life, must be more within the range of human apprehension — must concern men who want to act — more than any doctrines about the Divine Nature. It seems self-evident to a number of Laymen, and perhaps to as many Clergymen, that, if he who runneth is to read, the preachers of Law and Gospel must desert the transcendent ground, and confine themselves to rules and maxims which touch upon the doings of earth. And yet experience shows that, whenever this course has been followed, boors have cared as little for the preacher as gentlemen. The Puritans in the seventeenth century, the Methodists in the eighteenth, exercised an influence, as the Layman will be eager to

remind us, which the Establishment did not exercise. But the Puritans and the Methodists both ascended into the Divine region. The established Clergy, in the latter period at least, kept the safe earthly ground. They spoke of the morality of the Sermon on the Mount. And the courtiers, the wits in the clubs, the lackeys, the fine ladies, did not trouble themselves about the Sermon on the Mount. The people generally never supposed that what was said in learned sermons could concern them. Till they were told that God cared for them, and had sent His Son to redeem them, and His Spirit to sanctify them, the notion of not judging others, of not rendering evil for evil, of doing their alms in secret, of believing that they should be more cared for than the ravens, was utterly strange to their minds. The words were not disagreeable, because they suggested no duty or course of action; they signified nothing.

And any one who knows what this Methodist preaching was, will be aware that it did not only or chiefly refer to a Father. It spoke much more of a Son. It connected all thought of the Father with a Son. It told ignorant men that they could not come to the Father but through the Son, who had taken their flesh, and died for them. And if those preachers did not always say, as that "party leader" Athanasius would have taught them to say, that what was true of the Father was also true of the Son, — if they sometimes represented the Son as very different from the Father, as much more gracious than the Father, — I am not aware that they

helped the cause of practical morality much by this departure from orthodoxy. I apprehend that it was precisely this departure which led them to exhibit God according to some notions of their own, often injurious and immoral notions. Instead of being saved from metaphysics by their forgetfulness of the language of the creeds, it was this which involved them in metaphysics. They were obliged to speculate about the purposes of the Father whenever they lost sight of His union with the Son. So far as their Christianity was that which was delivered to those who heard "the Sermon on the Mount," its power was derived from the Person of Christ.

Of the place which the Holy Spirit held in this Methodist teaching I shall speak presently. All will at once confess that the power of it would have been nothing if that element had been wanting in it.

And I believe that the more we examine into the fanaticism which was rightly charged upon them, and was rightly connected with their notions of spiritual influences, the more we shall perceive that it arose mainly from their confounding the acts and character of the Spirit with their own acts and characters. Had they fully recognized the assertion that the Spirit proceedeth from the Father and the Son, and with the Father and Son together is worshipped and glorified, they would never have subjected the Divine to their earthly measures and corruptions. They would have recognized the Spirit as the Spirit of Power and Love and a sound mind. They would have confessed His operations in

their calmest moments; they would have asked Him to distinguish the varying moods of their minds, the varying conditions of their bodies, from that which is permanent and universal. The acts of the Spirit of God would have become intelligible to them through the morality of the Sermon on the Mount; the morality of the Sermon on the Mount would have been possible to them through the power of the Divine Spirit.

I take this example, to which I shall return again, because I am anxious to admit as fully as I can the charges of the Layman against the Establishment, and at the same time to show what I think its teachers might have done, and may still do, — if they adhere to their own lessons, — for the correction and elevation of that teaching which they once, in their folly, tried to extinguish. I do not mean that we want the creeds to help out the teaching of Christ. I mean that His teaching is leading us step by step to the confession of a Father, whose perfect image He was, whose will of grace and love He came to manifest, and to the confession of a Spirit of love and grace who dwelt in Him, whom He bestows on man, by whom He binds the members of the Church into one, by whom He illuminates the nations. Only in this Spirit, I believe, can we really confess the unity of the Godhead; only by the Spirit can there be that unity among men which our evil tempers are setting at naught, and which will be realized when the Sermon on the Mount becomes not in name, but in deed, the law of our lives. I am pleading for no theological theory. I am inquiring how wayfaring men may be

that which they are created to be, may do that which they are created to do.

II. I have been led by these considerations to think that I should not honor the Sermon on the Mount, as a practical code of morals, if I substituted it for the creeds. But I cannot pretend that I should adhere to that opinion if the creeds were what the Layman infers, from the discourses of the Bishop of Oxford, that Clergymen take them to be. That a mere terminology —that a mere "authoritative declaration of faith"—carries any moral power with it, I dare not persuade myself. I trust and hope, however, that that was not the meaning of the Bishop of Oxford.

The subject upon which he writes is the *Revelation* of God. That word is connected with light, life, discovery. It interprets itself through the voice of Psalmists and Prophets, who learnt what God is through their temptations, their doubts, their sins, whose histories and struggles remain as the great testimonies to us that He was in the days of old what He is now and ever will be. In his first Sermon on "the neglect of this Revelation," the Bishop dwells with much eloquence upon the exceeding peril which we are in of receiving it as if it were a mere heirloom. He says that the evil in the case of the Jews was, that Christ's "words appealed to nothing in themselves which answered to them." And it is equally true, he says, of numbers among us, that "they have grown up with the sights and sounds of Christianity around them; they learnt its creed in their childhood, they have inherited in some

degree, at least, its standard of morals; they deny nothing, and they believe nothing. In no true sense do they believe in *Him* who works these miracles before their eyes." Such lessons are most valuable. If there is not a conscience in us to meet Christ's words, they fall dead. If the Revelation kindles no inquiry, it kindles no faith. The Bishop may have used strange language in his second Sermon, about "doubts being cast out as shells shot into the fortress of the soul." Yet he recognizes in his preface "a religious inquiry into Revelation." Where no doubt is, inquiry is a farce, and a religious farce must be the worst kind of farce.

But though these expressions may not convey to the Bishop's mind that sense which they have conveyed to the Layman's, I am greatly afraid that many Clergymen do receive them, and will receive them, precisely in that sense. And therefore I cannot merely complain that the Layman's doctrine respecting the Sermon on the Mount is confuted by the experience of the last century. I hold that it *is* confuted by that experience. But much has happened since that century which obliges us to reconsider our position, both as divines and moralists; to ask ourselves why laymen again regard divinity and morality as hopelessly separated; to ask ourselves, whether our opposite schools may not both be promoting this separation; to ask ourselves, whether their quarrels might not be healed, if this quarrel were healed; whether the secret of reconciliation in both cases may not be the same. I believe the Letter to the Bishop of Oxford will be helpful in promoting these inquiries. The writer

of it has spoken very strongly of the moral decay and degradation which has been the result, in some countries, of stifling doubt. He has not spoken too strongly. Such facts require to be thrust upon us again and again. This is especially the time for dwelling upon them. Roman Catholic countries are passing through a great crisis. We are passing through a crisis, perhaps more serious, because less palpable. I believe we shall understand the condition of other lands better, and shall be able to help them more, if we devote a little steady thought to the religious history of our own.

That which changed John and Charles Wesley from rather formal Oxford divines into messengers of life to colliers and ruffians, was the discovery to their own minds and hearts of a Spirit who showed them their evil beneath all their respectability and devotion; who showed them a Deliverer from that evil; who showed them that He was not less a deliverer for the most disreputable and the most indevout. It was strictly a discovery or revelation to them and their fellow-workers. The εὕρηκα which followed it was in each case as genuine as it was in Archimedes. Nevertheless, they rejoiced to see and to proclaim that the discovery had been made before; that all the services of the Church were full of it; that prayers and sacraments would mean nothing if it were not true. The enormous difference between them and those to whom they preached made them feel that it was a common truth, however each person might have to learn it afresh for himself. But it was hard to retain that conviction when so many

in high places seemed to set their doctrine at naught; when every day showed them what resistance there was to it in the minds of rich and poor, learned and unlearned; in their hearers and in themselves.

The belief that they came first into a spiritual economy when they were first awakened to the clear perception of one, was sure to intrude itself into their minds. Soon it would gain possession of them. The experiences and struggles through which they had passed were the tests of their relationship to God. They were His children; they had the tokens of His grace; other men must be regarded as natural creatures; with great affection, with great zeal for their temporal good now, and for their conversion to spiritual blessings, — but still as exiles from the commonwealth of Israel, as having only the possibility and the capacity of obtaining the Grace of God, should He be pleased hereafter to bestow it.

Questions were involved in this view of things which could not even, from the first, be concealed. Was there a common morality for those who belonged to those two different spheres? If not, how were the moralities to be distinguished? Were worldly men to be left merely to the policeman, or to the codes of honor which they devised for themselves? Were spiritual men to disclaim the kind of obligations which held families and nations together? Those excellent men who first felt the power of the Evangelical movement discovered a practical answer to these questions; troubled themselves little about the theoretical. They exhibited a better and

nobler morality in the family, the counting-house, the senate, than had been ordinarily recognized there; they acted, *on the whole*, upon the principle that they were to do more than publicans and heathens of those acts which publicans and heathens recognized as good. They were to be more just, humane, courteous, than other men. I say, *on the whole*. There are, of course, great exceptions, — great deviations in the conduct of the best men. It was never quite certain how far they regarded what they called their secular politics as part of their Divine service; how far as a concession to the world. Much confusion was occasioned by this difficulty, and some discreditable acts. But that they adhered generally to these maxims is evident from the leavening effect which they have produced on society in the upper and middle classes. It is since that effect has been produced, — since their phrases have ceased to be unpopular and have become adopted as the dialect of respectable people, — since they have had religious organs to repeat and diffuse their opinions, and to assail those who dissent from them, — that this moral confusion has come out in all its strength. Now it thrusts itself into every religious family; it is the embarrassing question to nearly every young man who is entering life; it comes complicated with a thousand venerable recollections and a thousand vulgar, debasing facts, — with the thought of noble parents who did their work in the sight of God, — with the spectacle of a professional religious morality from which men of experience — whatever their opinions may be — turn away with suspicion and disgust,

saying plainly, that in the affairs of life anything is more trustworthy than that.

But while these facts have chiefly attracted the notice of laymen, ecclesiastics have been lifting up their protest against the doctrines which have been inherited from the evangelical teachers of the last century, upon another ground. They have said that these doctrines depend upon the feelings and experiences of those who have received them; whereas theology must be given to us, not created or wrought out by us. Such language makes a strong appeal to the sense in all our minds that there must be a truth which is different from our perceptions of it, which must regulate them, not be regulated by them. It appeals still more effectively to the hearts and minds of those who are conscious of insincerity, in giving themselves credit for feelings and experiences which they have never had, or which have passed away. Of late years it has gained strength from discoveries which have startled and confounded those who used to speak of religious experience as the one sure test of religious knowledge. That conviction has been fully embraced by many who have grown up under their education. It has led to a rebellion against the very conclusions which the evangelical teachers hold to be most vital and necessary.

That a doctrine which has those arguments in its favor should have acquired much popularity was inevitable. That it should have raised up many opponents would have been a proof of its strength rather than its weakness. But it has enlisted against it some of the

strongest convictions of those who had turned to it for help, who had hoped that it might lead them to some deeper foundation, and the Church to a real unity. For it has taken that form of demanding man's assent to "an authoritative document," "a confession drawn up by men," a mere "terminology," which has so scandalized this Layman. In that form it strikes not against some of the errors into which the evangelical school has fallen since it became popular and feeble, but against the principle to which it owed all its moral power. In that form it awakens the indignation of those men of science who would most readily acknowledge the worth of fixed truths, and the danger of subjecting them to the caprice of individual minds, if they were not told that these fixed truths were to be received, not on evidence which satisfies the reason, but as decrees coming down from another generation. In this form it demands precisely that moral slavery, that prostration of heart as well as intellect, which the Layman has traced in foreign lands. In this form it involves all those fatal consequences which the Bishop of Oxford has pointed out in his first Sermon, and which he so happily describes as "*a neglect of revelation.*"

A neglect of revelation altogether, at all events of that revelation which our creeds set forth, must be the effect of treating them merely as a set of propositions which we adopt because certain doctors and councils have transmitted them to us. Tertullian, in his book *De Præscriptionibus Hæreticorum*, which is said to be used by some of our bishops in the examination for

orders, teaches that the words, "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find," are intended only for those who have not received the Christian faith; to those who have received it they are utterly incapable. Surely in this treatment of Christ's words lay the seeds of this father's heresy. Holding such a doctrine he could not practically confess an inward Paraclete. He could only recognize some outward teacher whom Christ would send to impart a wisdom which He had not imparted. In one form or another the same result must always follow the same denial. If the creeds announce a dead dogma, I have all I want; I know all. If they announce a Father, a Son, and a Holy Ghost, they compel us to ask continually; to receive continually. And, if they announce this, what have I to do with councils or doctors who disputed about it? They either did not believe their own proclamation, or they remitted me to the God whom they proclaimed. He must reveal Himself to me; they cannot reveal Him. If I do not hold this, I reject the creed. If I think the Church is above God, or that I derive my knowledge of God from the Church, and not from Him, I shall be obliged to put the last articles of the creed before the first; I shall be obliged to change its method and its substance. And if I receive it as it stands, — if I confess that I am actually baptized in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, — dare I use my own discretion in casting doubts out of the fortress of my soul? May not these doubts have been cast into it by a gracious Spirit who wishes to break down its pride and self-sufficiency?

Am I trusting Him, if I trust my own wisdom and discernment in determining which are sinful, which are holy, if I do not submit them to Him who knows me, and knows what He would make of me?

III. This is an awful view of the subject, but no treatment of it which is not awful is fitting to its greatness, or to the seriousness of our position. It is the habit of trifling which is so perilous to us all, — the habit of speaking of God as if He were a distant or imaginary Being, *about* whom we may have many notions, but who does not really dwell in us or govern us. We must, by any means, be delivered from this state of mind. It is the source of infinite vanity, pettiness, bitterness. If we can be raised out of it, if we can really come to think of the Trinity not as set forth in a document, but as three distinct Persons united in the one Godhead of infinite love and charity, I believe the rewards will be these: —

1. Divinity will be felt to be inseparable from morality; the Sermon on the Mount will set forth to us what God is, how this righteousness has come forth in human acts, how He makes those acts possible for us.

2. There will not be two moralities, — one for the holy, one for the unholy. We shall understand that all morality is derived from God; that all immorality comes from ourselves. The holy will not dare to think that he is different from others. He will not dare to deny that God has redeemed all by His Son, and is claiming all by His Spirit, as heirs of His kingdom. He will, therefore, refer all good thoughts, feelings, that have been in any man, — all laws, customs, manners, which have had a

gracious influence on families and nations,—to Him; all evil, whenever it is found in good men or bad men, to rebellion against His light.

3. There will be no hostility between that spiritual revelation which was made to the mind of Wesley, and which gave the life to all the Methodist preaching, and the belief of an absolute truth which is not dependent upon any apprehensions, perceptions, feelings, of human beings. For we shall know that that which we perceive partially through the operation of the Holy Spirit is the righteousness and truth which has existed perfectly and eternally in the nature of God, and which was fully revealed in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and the Head of every man.

4. We shall feel that the processes in our own hearts and understandings are, indeed, very serious and terrible, as the Bishop of Oxford tells us that they are. Therefore we shall come to the light, that our deeds may be made manifest, whether they are wrought in God. We shall be afraid of crushing any thoughts, doubts, discoveries. We shall ask Him to use them all for the revelation of Himself to our minds. We shall ask Him to deliver us from that sloth and worldliness which make us ready to acquiesce, which make us impatient of anything that disturbs our ease, as well as from that equally lazy scepticism which is content to be without certainty, to abide in perpetual fluctuation.

5. We shall not venture to make such formal oppositions as the Bishop of Oxford has made between God's discoveries to us in the kingdom of Nature and in the

kingdom of Grace. We shall accept both as a revelation of Himself. We shall remember our Lord's parables. We shall remember St. Paul's words in the Epistle to the Romans. We shall not confound the two regions. We shall believe that the communications in both must be analogous, and that the methods in which we receive them must be analogous. We endanger both equally if we make the eye which receives the light the source of the light. We endanger both equally if we suppose that there is not an eye in each case to receive the light. Make the conscience or the reason into God, and you set at naught the witness of the conscience and the reason; you kill them that you may glorify them. Deny the conscience or the reason that you may glorify God, and you set at naught the God of whom the Bible speaks, the God who reveals Himself: you create another God out of your own imaginations; you enthrone an idol who enslaves our spirits in place of Him who has redeemed them by His Son, who quickens them by His own free Spirit.

6. We shall terminate the long strife between those who say that creeds and those who say that the Bible ought to be the bond of Christian communion. That strife must be perpetual if it is a question about authoritative documents. For the advocates of creeds will always say that there must be some document to interpret the Bible and gather up its contents. The supporters of the Bible will always say that, as it is a Divine book, all other books must look up to it. And both, in the heat of the controversy, will practically set their own

judgment above Creeds and Bible. But this is not what those men design who seriously and with a good heart contend for either of these courses. The supporters of the Bible feel that it is a living Book, a progressive Revelation; they cannot abandon it for a mere formula. The supporters of creeds believe that a progressive revelation must have an issue; that something must be revealed. If that which is revealed is the Living God, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, the more we confess the creed, the more we shall find all the living records of the Bible precious and intelligible; the less we shall be disposed to turn them into mere dry dogmas; the more we shall be sure that what was revealed to prophets and apostles through their spiritual and national trials, may be revealed to us through ours.

7. We shall learn what is to be sacrificed and what is not to be sacrificed, that we may establish concord among ourselves and concord with the sects around us. Everything which belongs to precedence, etiquette, our own tastes, habits, notions, tempers, we shall sacrifice if we yield ourselves to the Spirit of God who is working in us, if we are really conformed to those maxims of the Sermon on the Mount which the Layman wishes us to follow. We shall discover how true it is that the wars and fightings without have come from the lusts that war in our members; how impossible it is ever to establish peace in the Church while we are indulging ambitions, rivalries, envy, in our hearts. But we cannot part with that which witnesses to us of the uniting

Name. We cannot give up the belief that the Father is in the Son and the Son in the Father, because if we do, we give up the prayer "that they may all be one in us." And this prayer, we shall be sure, does comprehend all Churches whatsoever, the members of all schools and sects whatsoever, the positive principles of all schools and sects whatsoever. But it anathematizes and extinguishes schools and sects as such. Those who wish to have names of their own may have them; but they cannot keep them and yet confess the one Body of Christ.

8. We shall begin to perceive, therefore, that to accomplish this end we have need of a battle with principalities and powers. We shall feel that we have to fight with the giants of the present, rather than with the giants of the past; with all those organs of religious schools and parties which are endeavoring to keep them apart from one another, and to make them hate each other, rather than with the forms which have descended to us from other times. And yet we shall have the greatest dread of worshipping those forms, because we know that we are to worship God, and Him only. And we shall try not to be bitter with those organs of public opinion in our day whom we regard as the great foes of unity, because bitterness is of the spirit of division and not of the spirit of unity; because they discover to us the tempers and tendencies which are in ourselves; because in their position we might be much more ministers of strife and division than they are. We cannot seek peace with them, therefore we must not be angry if they wage per-

petual war with us. For what they want, is certain forms of communion which shall include themselves and as many as adopt opinions not very widely different from theirs. And what we want, is a ground in the name of the Eternal God, which shall embrace all, and at last subdue all to itself. We cannot draw lines like those of the Evangelical Alliance, which shall cut off the whole Latin and Greek Churches. Nothing can satisfy us which does not show us why they have been divided from us and from each other, and which shall remove the division. We shall find the causes of their division in their substitution of some other bond of union for the union in Christ, the Eternal King and High Priest; in their changing the Name which they profess, and for which their fathers fought, into a mere dogma derived from an external authority. Once persuade them that that Name is the living bond of union, and you remove the causes of their separation, as well as of that moral degradation which the Layman has so rightly traced to fear of inquiry, — a fear which only the God of Love can cast out.

9. And since it is He who reveals Himself to men, and who brings men to be of one mind, and since no compromises or controversies of ours can do that, we cannot feel that the fullest, broadest proclamation of this Name, such as we have in the creeds, is any sentence upon those who have not learnt the full meaning of it, or who in terms are denying it. I know well enough how good men have complained of the Athanasian Creed — how they do complain of it — on this ground.

I respect their opinions. I do not ask them to respect mine, or not to call me "sophist," "perverter of words from their natural sense," "cheat," or by any other name which occurs to them, while I say again, what I have often said before, that the Athanasian Creed has had the effect of compelling me to see that in speaking of the Trinity we *cannot* be speaking of a dogma; that we *cannot* think of the Trinity as the Creed bids us think of it while we treat it as a dogma; that to confound the Persons and divide the substances *must* be a moral offence with which any the most orthodox of those who accept the creed may be chargeable, *cannot* be an intellectual offence, which we may rightly charge upon those who do not enter into the terminology of it, or who cast it aside. I may have adopted this conclusion from pure wilfulness, or love of paradox, — God is the judge of that. If I have, I would warn young men that the pleasure which arises from those feelings compensates very ill the pain of being at variance with the dearest friends, or the suspicion of deliberate dishonesty. But whether I am right or wrong, and whatever becomes of the Athanasian Creed, — which, if it does canonize a mere dogma, and anathematize those who dissent from it, I should wish to perish utterly and forever, — I hold that our position as Christians and as maintainers of the Trinity obliges us to believe that all men whatsoever are living, moving, and having their being in that Name which has been declared to us; that we all know that Name most imperfectly, seeing it in little glimpses as hard struggles with death and sin enable us to see it and

take refuge in it; that it will at last be revealed in all its fulness and glory, and that that will be the new birthday of the universe for which the travails and groans of all creation are preparing.

10. It will be shown what those meant who have called our Church a compromise, and our Articles compromises between different parties among the Clergy. The word is to me a very offensive one. It speaks to me of that which is opposed to confession and martyrdom, it savors of diplomacy and of cowardice. When Lord Macaulay says that our Church is a compromise between Romish and Protestant doctrines, a compromise devised by Archbishop Cranmer, I am utterly at a loss to understand how an arrangement so foreign to the mind of the sixteenth century, which never could contrive any scheme for uniting Lutherans and Calvinists, — to say nothing of Lutherans and Romanists, — could have been invented by so commonplace a man, or how a society based on such a compromise could have stood for twenty years. Whereas, in some way or other, the English Church has lasted three centuries since that time; has passed through the convulsion of one civil war, in which Scotch Covenanters and English Puritans triumphed; through the reigns of two monarchs conspiring to deliver it over to Rome; through the reigns of at least three monarchs whose religious sympathies were entirely with Dutch or German Protestantism. It must have been a cunning compromise, surely, which has borne these shocks. But yet so eminent an historian could not have adopted the phrase, — so many amiable

and intelligent Churchmen could not have accepted it, —if there had not been a deep meaning involved in it. It has evidently not been the will of God that we should become Puritans, Covenanters, Romanists, Dutch or German Protestants. It has been the will of God that we should receive influences from all these quarters, that they should all leave their mark upon us. That mark may be a mere negative one; the Puritan element may be the mere contradiction of the Romanist, the Romish of the Calvinist, the Anglican of the foreign. There may be something weaker than each of these, each of them being received as the mere modification or dilution of the other. There may be something stronger than all of them, each contributing to that strength what the other cannot contribute, each being restrained from its natural tendency to exclude or extinguish the other. Which of these is to be the result, is the question, I conceive, upon which the fate of England turns. I say the fate of *England.* For though the Oxford Layman contemplates a condition of things in which the Anglican Episcopate and all that is connected with it may fall, and the other classes of society only feel that a great incubus is removed from them, I cannot understand such a doctrine. The last words of the Sermon on the Mount ring in my ears. The foundation upon which the Church stands is the foundation upon which the Nation stands. If the spiritual foundation is a sandy one, the whole house will fall, and great will be the fall of it. I do trust, therefore, that the Anglican Episcopate and the Anglican Clergy will earnestly consider

what their spiritual foundation is, whether it is an authoritative document, or an everlasting Name. I trust that by no hasty or rhetorical words of theirs they will weaken in men's minds the sense of this great distinction. I trust they will not, in trying to enforce the authority of documents, divide the Church which has been united in this Name, or lead men to think that it stands upon some opinions of theirs. The Articles have been a protection of the Church against the opinions of particular times, and of particular rulers. They have borne witness of opposing truths, none of which we can afford to lose. If the time is come when they are to do this work no longer, when we are to be left to the mercy of individual Bishops, who will enforce the decrees of religious newspapers, so let it be. God knows what is best for His Church ; we do not. Those will have to answer for this result who snatch at the Articles for the condemnation of this or that partial opinion, who cannot let them bear witness for God's truth without assisting them by prosecutions, which will equally expose our formularies to contempt by their failure or their success ; but in the latter case will lead to the greatest confusion respecting the nature of the Church itself. I trust the Bishops and the Clergy will be led to feel that the revelation of God is *their* probation, that God is asking them whether they can trust it, or whether they trust rather in their own notions and opinions. If they answer that question in one way, our probation, I fear, will soon be at an end ; our National Church will perish. If they answer the question in the

other way, they may be able to tell men that this Revelation is not merely their *probation*, though it may be, that — since all discoveries which stir our minds to their roots are a probation — that it is a light which may scatter our dark thoughts of God, and our dark thoughts of each other; a light which may penetrate to the farthest ends of the earth.

POSTSCRIPT.

The pamphlets referred to in this Tract are, —

1. Two Sermons of the Bishop of Oxford, entitled "The Revelation of God the Probation of Man," preached before the University of Oxford in February last. Oxford and London: J. H. and James Parker.

2. "The Suppression of Doubt is not Faith." A Letter to the Lord Bishop of Oxford, by a Layman. Oxford: Wheeler. Whittaker and Co., London.

3. "Concerning Doubt." A Letter to a Layman, by a Clergyman. Oxford and London: J. H. and James Parker.

4. "Concerning Doubt." A Reply to a Clergyman, by a Layman. Oxford: Wheeler.

The passage from Tertullian to which I have alluded is the classical one against Inquiry. It is contained in the chapters, from the eighth to the twelfth inclusive, in the Treatise *De Præscriptionibus*. In no passage of Tertullian are the arts of the Roman lawyer more blended with the ferocity of the African. In none are they more vigorously directed to the purpose of destroying the arguments of heretics, and of establishing the profoundest of all heresies. Whether Montanist or not when he wrote this treatise, there is contained in it not only his Montanism, but that of all who, in subsequent times, have accepted the decrees of some external prophet, male or female, because they have distrusted the presence and guidance of the Spirit of Christ. A per-

son really receiving the doctrine of the passage to which I have alluded, must cease at once to be a disciple, — must become the most self-satisfied and arrogant of doctors and disputers. And he must tell simple Christians that their faith in the most blessed promise of our Lord, upon which they have fed and lived, is a delusion; that they have nothing to ask, or seek, or knock for; that they have all they want in the dogmas which they have learnt by heart; that if they need more, they must go to some other than to Him in whom they supposed all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge were hid. It is easy to say, "O, of course, this was only meant to check the pride of Gnostical heretics." Miserable apology! You invent an argument for one use, which you are obliged to unsay and contradict the moment it is applied to another. Speaking to A, you say, "These words cannot mean what you pretend they mean." You turn to B, and tell him that they do mean exactly that for him. Who that accepts these lessons can accuse his neighbors of playing fast and loose with God's word?

VII.

TWO LAY DIALOGUES.

By J. M. LUDLOW.

I. ON LAWS OF NATURE, AND THE FAITH THEREIN.

II. ON POSITIVE PHILOSOPHY.

VII.

TWO LAY DIALOGUES.

By J. M. Ludlow.

Interlocutors: — Smith (*an enlightened man*).
Williams (*a plain-speaking man*).

I.

ON LAWS OF NATURE, AND THE FAITH THEREIN.

S. I thought one had done with all that church cackle about "Essays and Reviews," but now this report of the Lower House of Convocation has revived it. What do you say to it, Mr. Churchman?

W. It is difficult for me to say how much I deplore the drawing up of such a document. That, after all the discussion which has taken place on the subject, any set of ordinarily honest and sensible men should have signed a report dealing with the "Essays" as a whole, and cataloguing the heresies in them as if they belonged to each and all of the writers, is to me almost incredible. I trust, however, the returning good sense of the Bishops, as shown in their declining to proceed to synodical action, may stop further mischief.

S. But I suppose you don't deny that there does lie a collective responsibility upon the Essayists?

W. A responsibility of imprudence, amounting to an adverse presumption, certainly, but no responsibility of conspiracy; no adverse presumption which can stand against facts. The thing which most struck me on reading the book — after its general intrinsic dulness and feebleness, which render it such an unworthy occasion for all the pother that has been made about it — was the entirely contradictory character of the conclusions come to by its various authors. Dr. Williams is quite at issue with Professor Powell; both of them again with Mr. Wilson; whilst Mr. Pattison seems almost to have nothing in common with any of his fellow-writers.

S. Well, admit that the Essayists are not so formidable as, from the howling and uproar they have stirred up amongst you Churchmen, they may have seemed to be. What matter? The great cause is not hindered by the weakness of such allies of the eleventh hour.

W. What great cause?

S. The great cause of science and civilization and modern advancement. Surely the Church cannot stand ten years on her present footing after such a book.

W. Why so?

S. Because, however the Essayists may upset each other, or their own selves, there is one thing which they all help to upset, and that is the Bible.

W. How so?

S. When I say the Bible, I mean, of course, the infallible authority of the Bible. Sincere Bibliolatry, I maintain, is impossible to any one who has once read that volume.

W. Thank God if it were so!

S. How? What other foundation has your Church than the infallible authority of the Bible?

W. "Other foundation can no man lay than is laid, — Jesus Christ." I believe that there are three parallel idolatries which infect the Church in all ages and countries, — the idolatry of an infallible Man, which comes out specially in the Papolatry of Rome; the idolatry of an infallible Church; and the idolatry of an infallible Book, which is the special idolatry of us Protestants. All three tend equally to obscure the face and mask the voice of the infallible God, whom alone we have to worship.

S. Then you throw the Bible overboard?

W. God forbid! God's word and God's work are the Two Witnesses which are forever prophesying of Him, which man's brutal passions, ignorance, or conceit may seem to slay, but which always rise up anew to give their testimony.

S. Too mystical by half for me. But to come to the point. You seem to admit that the Bible is not infallible. What good can a fallible Bible do for you?

W. All the good which the fallible men have done by whom it was written.

S. But your orthodox theory is that they were inspired.

W. Certainly.

S. In charity to yourself, I must say that inspiration seems to me to involve infallibility. What could a fallible inspiration amount to?

W. Of course all inspiration from God is infallible as its author. But to conclude from the infallibility of the inspiration to the infallibility of the inspired man or inspired thing, appears to me the greatest of fallacies. What St. Paul says of himself and his brother apostles applies equally to all their sayings and writings, — "We have this treasure in earthen vessels."

S. Then, although some apostle says "all Scripture was inspired of God," inspired Scripture may err just as an inspired apostle?

W. The text of inspired Scripture certainly may err, just as we are taught by Scripture itself that inspired apostles did err. A single various reading is sufficient to prove that point.

S. Where, then, do you find your standing-point?

W. I seek it nowhere but in the God of Truth Himself, who I believe is perpetually revealing Himself through all manner of fallible instruments, as the sun is forever shining through all manner of refracting and distorting media.

S. And you hold the Bible a distorting medium?

W. So far as the text of it is a human work, necessarily a refracting one; distorting only, if anywhere the human element in it overpowers and stifles the divine.

S. I must say I do not see what you gain in certainty from your infallible God, with only fallible witnesses to vouch for Him.

W. I do not look for certainty, — that intellectual certainty which you speak of. If I could find it, I should lose faith. There is a grand thought in one of

Luther's early theses, to the effect, that if the article of the Holy Trinity could be proved by a syllogism, it would be known, and not believed.* The same principle applies to all the objects of Religion. Thank God that all Anselmian or Cartesian arguments to prove logically the existence of a God, to construct Him as it were *a priori*, have proved fallacious! The failure of such reasonings is the very saving of faith.

S. Then you don't think the existence of a Deity can be proved by reasoning?

W. No, thank God, — no more than the sun's shining. The spiritual Sun, like the natural one, simply reveals Himself in light.

S. What then is your theory of Inspiration?

W. Never mind what my theory of inspiration is. The real question at issue is this, — is there an inspiring God?

S. But tell me; — You say you hold the Bible to be inspired; you speak of it as the Word of God. Do you seriously think, after all our late discoveries in physical, and I might say in social science, that it can possibly retain that character, if once it be freely treated?

W. If once it be freely treated! Why, my dear sir, it is precisely because it is the Word of God that the

* "Si forma syllogistica tenet in divinis, articulus Trinitatis erit scitus, et non creditus." — Luther's Works, by Melancthon, Vol. I. p. 57. Or see Merle d'Aubigné's "Histoire de la Réformation," Vol. I. p. 303. The proposition is one of those which Luther did not himself maintain, but had argued before him by Gunther, in 1517.

Bible has a right to be freely treated, — treated with a freedom exceeding all that can be applied to any other book whatsoever. If it is, as I believe it, the chosen receptacle of that truth which shall make us free, how can it be afraid of any kind of freedom? You might as well tell me that the sun could not bear examination by the light of a candle, as that God's Bible could not bear man's freedom. Do not, however, confound freedom with insolence, *Freiheit* with *Frechheit*.

S. Do you mean to say that the Bible as it stands could bear even the free sifting of the Canon? I am really afraid, Williams, you are a terrible heretic!

W. I believe I am simply following the true doctrine of the Church throughout all ages. The very fixing of the Canon implies the most absolute freedom of treatment in respect to Scripture. You may search in vain, at the origin of any one book of Scripture, for any of those expedients which seek to elude the grasp of human freedom, for the buried gold plates, and the unknown characters, and the revealing vision of the Book of Mormon. Two or three centuries elapse after the Christian era, during which there is no Canon, during which confessors live and martyrs die for the faith, never doubting that there is a God revealed in human form, a Heavenly Father, who has manifested Himself in a well-beloved Son, who speaks by the mouth of a Holy Spirit, to whom the written word gives witness; and yet blundering often in the exercise of their free faith and love, setting religious novelets, like the Shepherd of Hermas, and codes of traditional rules, like the

Apostolical Constitutions, on the same line as the most authentic records of our Lord's life. Then the Church takes the matter in hand, and, strong in her assurance of inspired freedom, chooses, sanctions, canonizes. Did she abdicate her once exercised freedom thereupon? By no means. Right or wrong, the adoption of the so-called Apocrypha into the Canon by the Romish Church, the qualified use or the rejection of them by the Protestant churches, bear equal witness to that freedom. Either act testifies to a faith that God's word can and will reveal itself as such to human minds, whether called Scripture or not. How much of prejudice or self-will may have warped the judgment of either party, I care not here to inquire.

S. Your fixings or reformings of the Canon by councils and churches are at least as much instances of collective authority, as of Christian freedom. But the human mind has shaken off, or is fast shaking off, the fetters of collective authority in such matters. We are learning more and more to judge for ourselves, if only at second hand. Those who think at all on such matters would prefer the sole authority of Tischendorf as to a text, to that of the whole Nicene Council. It is that individual sifting of the Canon which the Church cannot stand.

W. Cannot stand! Why, it has stood it for eighteen and a half centuries! Chrysostom rejected the narrative of the woman taken in adultery; Luther, the whole Epistle of St. James; others, the Apocalypse; others the Epistle of Jude; Coleridge, what he terms the

"christopædia" in both Matthew and Luke; Calvin doubted the 2d of Peter. But whether they were right, or whether they were mistaken, do you suppose that it was because they did *not* think the Bible the inspired Word of God, or because they did not love it, that they so dealt with certain portions of it? No, a thousand times, no! It was because they deemed it God's Word, because they loved it with that perfect love which casteth out fear, that they held it their duty to weed out of it what they deemed to be foreign and insititious.

S. But if one man strikes out a narrative, and another a chapter, and a third a whole book, there may remain at last nothing at all. It becomes a very Babel of private judgments, such as Romanists are always taunting Protestants for fostering. I cannot help thinking that, if you are to build anything upon the Bible at all, you had better claim infallibility for it at once.

W. To claim infallibility for any created person or thing is, as it seems to me, the very way to that Babel you speak of by a roundabout; the way to self-worship, and the utter dissolution of all authority. You have, we will say, an infallible Book. But what is the use of it, asks the High-Churchman, if you have not an infallible interpreter of that Book? Infallible as it may be, if its meaning be obscure or perverted, it can but lead you astray. The Bible, interpreted by the General Councils of the Church, such is your only infallible guide. And of what use, asks the Romanist, are your Councils alone, meeting at long intervals, disused now for centuries, against ever-recurring perplexities of interpretation?

You need a living interpreter who shall be always accessible. Councils are infallible, no doubt; but their decrees themselves require interpretation; their infallibility needs to be carried out, supplemented, continued, by an infallible Pope. And what is the use of an infallible interpreter, it has long since been asked, if there is not to be an infallible discerner of such interpreter? Between the infallible Pope and the infallible anti-Pope, what fallible man shall decide? And so, reeling on from rock to rock after its phantom of earthly certainty, the human mind comes to this at last, that a Stirner will treat a Bruno Bauer's *Homo homini Deus* as "Pfaffenthum": *Homo sibi Deus* is the last end of all knowledge.

S. I see you are driving me back to your former position, as to faith, not certainty, being the rule of spiritual life. I grant you that it seems to be one aspect of the Pauline dogma, which took so mighty a hold upon Luther, "The just shall live by faith." But I rather think you will find the Protestant world at least as far from accepting the doctrine in the light in which you place it, as the Romish world was in the sixteenth century from accepting it in the light in which Luther placed it. Certainty — realized, embodied certainty — is that which we care for. Wherever we seem to find it, — whether in a book, a church, a man, in the laws of nature, in the laws of mathematics, in the laws of political economy, or even in the mere power of wealth, — there we must bide, by that we must cling. We long for something fixed, immutable, some footing that shall

never fail us, some rock on which we may securely build.

W. God forbid that that longing should ever fail or be weakened in us! I only ask you to take care not to shift certainty from its source to its manifestations, still less to our own perception of it. The last I hold to be the primeval devilish temptation. "To be as gods, knowing good and evil"; to escape in matters of right and wrong out of the sphere of dependent living faith into a serene but dead sphere of pure knowledge, where duty and law become as mere mathematical equations, — such is what our intellect is always soliciting us to do. The attempt passes under different names; in one age it calls itself "scholastic theology," in another "positive philosophy"; but the tendency is always the same, to substitute knowledge for faith, intellect for conscience, man for God.

S. Ay; but how is it that one is driven from the Bible to positive philosophy? I who speak to you, I once believed in the Bible as firmly and undoubtingly as the most absolute Bibliolater himself. I held it to be "one entire and perfect chrysolite," flawless, speckless. I built my whole life — I am afraid I cannot say my outward conduct, but the inmost life of my thoughts — upon its authority. That which it blessed I blessed, that which it cursed I cursed. What a wrench it was to my whole being, when physical science, philology, history, logic, convinced me that it could be at fault, — when I had to give up, first the sun's standing still on Ajalon, then the geological sequency of the first chapter

of Genesis, then the verse of the three witnesses, &c., &c., — you would smile if I attempted to describe. Fortunately, the balm was at hand with the antidote. It was only by plunging deeper into science that I escaped utter shipwreck; and then I saw rise before me that form of absolute and infallible certainty which I had fancied to have seen enthroned on the pedestal of the Scriptures. The oxygen and the carbon, the iron and the platinum, — these were *certain* things; certain in their nature, certain in their qualities, certain in their actions; ruled by fixed laws, whether in their combinations, or in the resolutions of their compounds. Chemistry thus afforded me my first standing-point, as mathematics have to others; then physics, then natural science in general. I rather came back from these, through astronomy, to mathematics. For the laws of mathematics, until applied, are dead laws; the laws of physical science are laws of life. A pebble has a potentiality of life about it which a triangle has not. Dull and dead as it seems, you know that every one such is really a living Proteus, capable of putting on unnumbered myriads of forms. Yet mathematics led me on to political economy, which seemed in turn to introduce some fixed elements into the shapeless chaos of history. And then came the revelation of Positive Philosophy, reducing all moral facts, as well as physical ones, under the sway of its generalizations, and by simply taking things as they are, and renouncing all impotent chasing after the will-o'-the-wisps of primary or final causes, shedding through all nature, all knowledge, the blaze of fixed law and univer-

sal order. When once that light had come, the notion of a capricious, wonder-working God, at one time interrupting the course and harmony of nature for some inscrutable purposes of his own, at others suffering it to run on unperturbed, at whatever cost of doubt and contempt for his own divinity, — the notion of particular men endowed with exceptional gifts, which, however wonderful in themselves, yet reduced the holders of them, as passive instruments, such as they were represented to be, below the level of ordinary intelligence, — the notion of a particular book exceptionally written, to be exceptionally treated, and exceptionally construed, — became no longer unsatisfying only, but positively insufferable. I see no longer any room for a God. If there be one, as I own the instincts of mankind, often prescient of hidden truth, seem to indicate, he must be a part of the universal mechanism ; his place and functions in the economy of the world must some day be scientifically determined.

W. Perhaps the mode in which the Bible has been commonly treated has had a good deal to say to the course which you have taken. But I told you the question was at bottom as to the existence of an inspiring God.

S. I did not wish to shock you, as I fear I must have done ; but, somehow, you have wrested the avowal from me. Pray forgive me if I have pained you.

W. I am extremely thankful to you for having spoken out the thoughts which I believe are fermenting in the hearts of thousands. The only way of ever get-

ting rid of our doubts is by turning them manfully inside out to the light. But now tell me, — those laws, that order, that harmony of which you speak, — do you think they are certainties?

S. Unquestionably.

W. Demonstrable *a priori?*

S. No. To spare time, let me say at once, that I consider the world has got beyond the shallow logical scepticism of former days. Of course, I can't prove *a priori* that black is black, or that I am myself, or that you are you; but nothing can come out of that sort of arguing. It is a dry, barren exercise of the intellect, a mere clatter of dead bones. No man who has once felt the might and fruitfulness of facts can ever amuse himself with such senile child's play, which only reminds one of the kite-flying of ancient gray-beards among the Chinese. Work, growth, development, progress, are what the world wants. To achieve these, facts we must accept, or we can do nothing.

W. Then do you think the law and order you speak of are the subject of observation?

S. No. I grant you, that phenomena are the only field of observation. All that observation can reach to amidst phenomena, are certain successions and resemblances. What we call laws are the various relations themselves of succession and resemblance, being invariable ones. The succession differs from its law, as a progression differs from its ratio.

W. Ay, — a pert critic of Mr. Kingsley, in a late number of the *Westminster*, explains law as "a uniformity

observed in the course of nature." But still, how do you reach beyond the "succession" and the "similitude" to the "relation" itself, beyond the "course of nature" to its "uniformity"?

S. By induction, that leaps from the succession to the law which constitutes it.

W. Is the leap a necessary one?

S. The first who take such leaps are the great discoverers of the world. It is easy work following them.

W. Is the law, then, in your mind, or in the facts?

S. The idealist may say, in the mind; for me, undoubtedly in the facts. The mind, as it seems to me, no more makes the law than it makes the facts themselves.

W. Your postulates, therefore, seem to be two, — acceptance of phenomena (shall we say facts?) by observation; acceptance of law by induction.

S. Certainly.

W. Where, then, do you find the certainty you speak of? How do you prove it?

S. My dear fellow I do not prove the certainty of the law; it proves itself. That law of specific gravity, comparative density, call it what you will, according to which a cork floats and does not sink in the water, needs no demonstration but that of its own existence. I cannot choose but accept it.

W. If you saw a cork sink instead of floating, should you deem the law at fault?

S. The law could not be at fault; the fault must be in my appli . . . . . Ah! I see what you are after.

Well, I had better admit it at once. Your doctrine of an infallible God, indemonstrable, yet revealing Himself to and through fallible instruments, stands much on the same footing as mine, of alike indemonstrable, yet infallible laws, exhibiting themselves to fallible minds through phenomena which may be fallacious.

W. You must go further still. You must admit that the relation between you and the law is equally one of faith. Unless you have that, the law remains dead to you; you cannot build upon it.

S. How so?

W. What you call induction is really a belief that the law is, a trust in its reality. However dimly, you must somehow have looked for it, forefelt it, before finding it. When you talk of seeing it, it is with no bodily eye. *That* only takes in the phenomena in and beneath which it lies. What you call the knowledge of it is at bottom only "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

S. Well, I have faith in laws, as you have faith in God. Apart from the facts upon which each rests, your faith is perhaps as reasonable as mine. Will that satisfy you?

W. What do you mean by "apart from the facts upon which each rests"?

S. I mean that the facts upon which my faith rests are *certain* facts, facts which command the reasonable assent of every man who looks at them; whereas the so-called facts upon which yours rests, if accepted by some reasonable men, are absolutely denied by many

other quite as reasonable men, and therefore cannot pass for certain facts.

W. Well, that there may be no mistake about it, I affirm that the Being of God, His power and His goodness, the existence of an evil spirit, the existence of a nature in man capable of communication both with God and with the evil one, the reality of such communication, the struggle of the evil one against Good, the assured victory of Good, the human sympathies of the Power of Goodness, are (amongst others of a similar order) facts to me of personal experience, no less certain than that of my own existence, or any which you can name in the physical world; and yet facts which lie only, as it were, on the threshold of a whole world of spiritual facts beyond.

S. Possibly (though some of your affirmations, I confess, rather stagger me); but, once more, however certain these facts may be to you, they are not even reasonable to others.

W. But suppose the primary character of these facts which I affirm were not to be reasonable; suppose they belonged to a sphere above that of reason, just as the sphere of reason, in which your faith realizes the law, is above that of observation, wherein your perception only realizes the fact?

S. Why are you in that highest sphere and I not?

W. Why was the world for thousands of years only in the sphere of observation with reference to electricity, emerging only quite recently into the sphere of reason? Did you not yourself admit just now that it was only

the great discoverers who took that first leap of induction which reveals the law?

S. A bad argument. As soon as the facts of electricity were discovered to be subject to a law, all the world, so far as it occupied itself with the subject, instantly emerged into that sphere of reason. Physicists might dispute as to particular theories and particular applications; but that there was a law of electricity they all henceforth accepted. Whereas, since the world was, almost, some men have asserted that there was this sphere of faith, of religion, or of the spirit, — whatever you may choose to call it, — without the laws which they pretended to have discovered in it coming the least home to the apprehensions of others.

W. If you will think of it, the heliocentric view of astronomy, after having been pointed out by Pythagoras, was denied and rejected by almost all reasonable men and professed astronomers for thousands of years, and was actually succeeded by the elaborately false geocentric theory of Ptolemy; and when brought out into new light by Copernicus, it was again hotly denied, argued against, denounced, by most reasonable men and professed astronomers (to say nothing of cardinals and popes), for nearly a century. And on the other hand, — if you keep up the distinction, which I think you would find an untenable one, according to your own principles, between the acceptance of the existence of a law, and the acceptance of the law, — I think you will here equally admit that the acceptance of the existence of a God, a spiritual world, has been quite as general

as that of any so-called laws of nature. But are you not introducing into the question a wholly new criterion of certainty, — viz. that of a *consensus* of the majority, — Joseph de Maistre's last device for upholding Romanism?

S. I say that the certain, infallible law proves — no, approves — itself to be such, by forcing its acceptance on the vast majority of reasonable men who look into the matter.

W. In short, you make the infallible law for its sanction depend upon the assent of a certain number of fallible men. I repeat that, upon such data, you cannot but admit the existence of a God.

S. Perhaps so; except that as to myself, whilst admitting the *consensus*, I cannot see the self-demonstration. The fact is, if there be a God, I don't know what to do with him.

W. I quite agree with you that such a God as we have found hitherto, the mere expression of a puzzle of the intellect, is not worth having. In the mean while, I think you will admit that the faith of us Christians, except so far as it wants, for the facts upon which it professes to rest, a certain *consensus* on the part of certain enlightened men in the nineteenth and other centuries, stands upon the same footing as that of the said enlightened men in law and harmony and order. Now, we Christian men claim to hold quite as strong a faith in law and order and harmony as the very strongest believers amongst you enlightened men; only we say that that faith is itself a puzzle without a higher faith

still. Charles Fourier, the Phalansterian, — than whom, in many respects, a more acute observer or reasoner never lived in this century, — used, in support of his theories of co-operation, to employ an illustration which seems to me perfectly appropriate here. The existence of a new world, he observes, was denied, not only before Columbus found it, but after he did so. It was a fact, nevertheless; and from the moment that fact was realized by any one, the testimony of the one man who had realized it was worth any number of adverse testimonies of those who had not. So, I contend, are we Christians, asserting the facts of a spiritual order of the world from experience, better worth listening to than any number of mere worshippers of law and order who know not of them.

S. The very argument of the spirit-rappers for the existence of an order of facts beyond Christianity itself. However, to come to the point, I don't want your spiritual order of facts, whether inclusive or exclusive of turning tables and air-borne humbugs.

W. Are, then, law and order altogether sufficient to you for the explanation of all the facts of the universe?

S. No, they are not. There is a very puzzling element besides, which is force. I say force, without fear of taking a metaphysical abstraction for a reality, because all scientific observation tends to show that all force is one, however varied may be its phenomena. There is something that produces or evolves phenomena; there is some definite relation between them; according to that relation they arrange themselves in what I perceive as a

certain symmetry. Thus, force and law, with order for the joint manifestation of both; these I find everywhere and in all things.

W. My dear friend, how tight you shut your eyes not to see God! Why, your triad of force, law, and order tells distinctly of a far higher triad, — one of power and justice and goodness, — which, when the human spirit once takes hold of them fully, reveal themselves to it as a personal triune God! But tell me something more about this force.

S. Well, I have admitted, and I must admit, that it is a great puzzle. I see that it is absolutely necessary to bring out law and make it fruitful, since without it law would be dead or nowhere. And yet it seems in some strange way to be subject to law, and only when working with it to evoke order.

W. Does it not always work with it?

S. Of course it must, but often it does not seem so. When the lightning strikes a tree, and puts an end to all the orderly development of vegetation, it seems at first a bare conflict of force with law. Then one discovers that the lightning itself follows a law of its own: but the puzzle seems only the greater; how should law conflict with law? how should one relation of succession between phenomena be altogether at variance with another and interrupt it? Then comes the higher discovery that the very interruptions have a sequency of their own; that there are meteorologic laws to which both the lightning and the vegetation are subject. Still, I must say that in the struggle, apparent or real, between

force and law, or between law and law, and the ultimate triumph of law in a higher shape, and its beautiful results, there seems at the first to be something strangely personal.

W. How do you mean?

S. I mean that one perceives somehow in outer nature as it were a shadow of what one feels to be going on in one's own self. There meets us a sort of summary of that seeming or real struggle which I have mentioned in the workings of our will. How extraordinary are those statistics of Quételet's as to the fixed proportions of certain relations in marriages, as respects age, status, complexion, &c.! What can seem more spontaneous, more removed from the domain of law, than my falling in love with and marrying a particular woman? And yet, after all, my doing so goes to make up certain fixed figures of the number of men who marry women younger than themselves or older; of light-haired men who marry light or dark haired women, &c., &c.

W. You admit, then, the existence of a will in man?

S. I denied it for many years; as long, in sooth, as I could. -But at last it struck me that there was an affectation in denying it. I must admit it as a fact, like other facts. I can't do without it. And no doubt it is the highest manifestation of force we know of.

W. You admit then fully that the will is subject to law?

S. Certainly. I can conceive of nothing which shall not be subject to it.

W. What you have said about force and the will

appears to me pregnant with more meaning than you seem yourself to attribute to your words. Meanwhile, however, tell me, — since you reckon law's domain to be universal, — you would not assent to that bold idea thrown out by Mr. Mill, that there may conceivably be, "in distant parts of the stellar regions," worlds where events follow each other without regularity, and all, as we should say, is subject to chance? *

S. If there were such, the very existence of them must be in some definite relation to other worlds where law reigned.

W. Then supposing an atom of that chance-ruled world suddenly endowed with consciousness, and conceiving the notion of law, that notion would be a true one, although every fact around it without exception seemed to prove it false?

S. Certainly.

W. Then there can be such a thing as a true faith which shall be beyond and against all facts of observation?

S. You are pressing me very hard; but I suppose I had best admit it?

W. Such faith would not be in the least needed to explain the world of immediate observation, but only to explain other worlds beyond, and the relation of the former to them?

* "The uniformity in the course of events, otherwise called the law of causation, must be received, not as a law of the universe, but of that portion of it only which is within the range of our means of sure observation, with a reasonable degree of extension to adjacent cases." — See Mill's Logic, vol. ii. pp. 117, 118.

S. Of course.

W. Then your answer, "I do not need them," to my assertion of the facts and laws of a spiritual world, would appear to be no answer at all.

S. Go on; I shall perhaps be able to answer you by and by.

W. A thoroughly honest reply, and one which I always respect. But in this world of chance, if any one single manifestation of order took place, it would be really "an interruption of the course of nature." Yet it would only be a fact, but a fact from another sphere, and ruled by a higher law.

S. I see what you are after. You are going to infer that what are called miracles are really manifestations of a higher invisible order of things, and therefore no stumbling-blocks to a faith in visible order.

W. I do assert it most strongly, not as my own inference, but as the testimony of the whole Bible. Indeed, it is most unfortunate, as has been observed, that the low word "miracles," should ever have crept into our Bible at all. It by no means translates the σημεῖα, signs, or the δυνάμεις, virtues, of the Greek texts. Neither the Vulgate nor Wycliff are guilty of the misrendering.

S. But now come, do you really wish me to accept miracles on the authority of the Bible?

W. When you accept the Bible as God's word, as the witness to Christ's kingdom, certainly; till then, certainly not.

S. But how am I to accept the Bible as God's word if I am to treat it as any other book, which I think you

admitted was the treatment to be applied to it? Is the Bible like any other book, or not?

W. I never admitted that the Bible was to be treated like *any* other book. I should never think of asking you to treat Homer or Shakespeare like *any* other book. I should think you a fool or a brute if you treated either as you might do a penny newspaper. Want of reverence in our treatment of great books and great authors is, I am convinced, both a common and a serious fault amongst us. You cannot judge of the Bible fairly, as a mere fact, with a view to the evolution of a Comtian law, without taking into account that it is a book on which, for thousands of years now, an ever-increasing proportion of the world's noblest races have fed, which has been a mighty influence in their development, which has helped, more than we can ever measure, to make you and me what we are.

S. Do you suppose that Christian missionaries in India or Turkey apply to the Vedas or the Koran the measure which you require me to apply to the Bible?

W. If they do not, they will bear the penalty either in ill-success, or in the weakening of the sense of reverence amongst their converts.

S. Well, I amend my question, — Is the Bible like any other *great* book or not?

W. It is, as its name implies, the Book of books, *the* Book; not an exception to a law, but the type of it.

S. But still, why is it to be treated differently from other books? Why is it to bear a witness that other

books are not expected to bear? Why are miracles to be accepted by any one on its authority?

W. I would expressly guard myself from asserting that there are no miracles recorded in other books than the Bible. But my answer is very simple. Because the purpose of the Bible is different from that of all other books, as being the very crown and summit of all *their* different purposes, — to bear witness, as I said before, of the spiritual world and of its King.

S. But do not other books bear such witness? The Vedas and Koran, for instance, of which we have been speaking, or the book of Mormon?

W. Certainly other books do bear such witness, and thank God that they do! Certainly the Vedas, the Koran, the book of Mormon, do in their measure bear such witness, or they would never have had the hold they have had, and have still, on men's minds, never would have moulded nations and polities to themselves. But as between the Bible and these books, and all other like books in the world, facts have decided. The history and condition of India, the Mohammedan races, Utah, as compared with our Christendom, ought sufficiently to show that a greater book than Koran or Veda is here.

S. Well, but without going out of the pale of Christendom, why is the Bible to stand apart from all other religious books, if they bear the same witness? Why, for instance, if there is to be a Canon of Scripture, should not the "Imitation of Christ" be canonized?

W. All the stones of a pyramid help to point up-

wards. But it is only the last stone or tier of stones that form *the* summit, and express the purpose of all the others; and precisely because they form the summit, they must open prospects which can be obtained from no others.

S. I cannot see why, if there is to be a Canon, it ever should be closed. There seems something so — unprogressive, I must call it, in the idea.

W. You cannot see why Babel should not be ever a-building. To me, viewing as I do the Incarnation of Christ as the centre-point of all the world's history, it seems quite natural that when a design is fulfilled the edifice should stop. Don't confound progress with mere motion. To use a homely comparison, which is the most progressive, the jackass who is turning a well-wheel, or the one who is standing stock still munching a bunch of thistles? I should say the latter.

S. Blasphemer of progress! to use such a comparison! But I am beginning to feel somehow as if I had been treading a wheel myself. I must think over what you have said. But I don't fancy you will be able to carry me altogether along with you.

W. I could not if I tried. I have travelled myself by a very different road. I have simply gone over to yours in the hope of showing you that it led, more than probably you thought, in the same direction as my own. Understand me clearly. I have not endeavored to prove to you God or Christianity. I have simply endeavored to show you, on the ground of your faith in Cosmic law and order, as self-manifested in facts, that a

faith in a Divine law and order, which you deny and we assert to be thus self-manifested, might be quite as true and reasonable, even if apparently contradicted by all facts whatsoever within your own observation; that the Divine law and order might entirely override and overcome such facts and their Cosmic law and order; and that therefore a book, bearing witness to such Divine law and order was not to be rejected because it recorded facts at variance with the Cosmic law and order, but coherent with the Divine law and order. Whether the Divine law and order are or are not absolutely needed by the Cosmical facts, and their law and order, to explain and support them, is a deeper question, over the brink of which we have sometimes ventured without entering it altogether. But, in the mean while, I have the right to tell you that we do really agree much more than you yet fancy; that our faiths are not contradictory, however different on many points; that you worship an Unknown God. I have the right to repeat to you what I said before, that the Force, and the Law, and the Order which you bow to, which you hold to with a faith so robust that you would extend their dominion over the realms of chance itself, are no dry principles, but the very God whom we adore, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

S. I do not see it yet.

II.

POSITIVE PHILOSOPHY.

S. I HAVE been thinking a good deal about our conversation of the other day. I see that at bottom you want me to throw my Positive Philosophy overboard.

W. Not by any means. I think Positive Philosophy has its appointed province, for which it is well fitted; but your mistake, and that of its votaries, is to extend its application far beyond its capacity.

S. Well, I can only say that the first time I read Comte it seemed to me that I had never read a book before in my life.

W. The very same expression that was once used to me by a French "Procureur-Général" of great ability, respecting a book the very opposite of Comte's. Just guess one or two.

S. Aristotle, Plato, À Kempis, Jacob Behmen, Rousseau, Hegel.

W. An impartial selection, no doubt, but still wide from the mark. No, Montaigne's Essays.

S. From which, I suppose, you wish me to conclude that faith in Comte and faith in Montaigne are both matters of idiosyncrasy?

W. Not quite that. But I wish you English Comtians would open your eyes to the fact that, except with a very few devotees, on the Continent, where he has

been longest and best known, Comte has simply, like Hegel, settled down into his place in the history of philosophy, as a man of original mind, who has brought a few useful truths into fuller light, but who neither deserves to be set up as an oracle, nor to be denounced as a portent, any more than Montaigne himself.

S. No man, you know, is a prophet in his own country. Reverencing Comte as I do, I feel rather proud that England should have appreciated him the best of any nation yet.

W. Come, what do you find in him?

S. Infinite deliverance from all your heart-bewildering theology and brain-muddling metaphysics. I declare I never felt myself a free man — intellectually — till the day when I read that noble passage in the introduction to the Philosophy, where he teaches us to confine our reasoning and observation to the invariable relations of succession and similitude between phenomena.* In fact, though, as I told you before, political economy had given me my first glimmering sense of a meaning in history, the world of physical and mathematical science was really the only one which existed for me till I had read

* "In the positive state, the human mind, recognizing the impossibility of obtaining absolute notions, gives up seeking for the origin and destination of the universe, and for a knowledge of the intrinsic causes of phenomena, in order to attach itself solely to the discovery, by the well-combined use of reasoning and observation, of their actual laws (*leurs lois effectives*), i. e. of their invariable relations of succession and similitude. The explanation of facts, being reduced then to its true terms, becomes nothing more than the connection established between the different particular phenomena, and some general facts, of which the progress of science tends always to diminish the number." — *Philosophie Positive*, Vol. I pp. 4, 5.

Comte. The luminous distinction between the three stages of development — theological, metaphysical, positive — has shone out since then to me more and more throughout all history.

W. I do not quarrel with the distinction, still less with the order of development. To me there is a profound meaning in the admission, which Comte's view implies, that the fountain-head of all knowledge is theological, — that the metaphysical, or as a Greek would probably call it, the psychical stage comes next, — the merely practical, or positive, the last. The threefold division thus pointed out corresponds exactly, as it seems to me, to that triad of man's personality which St. Paul terms the spirit, soul, and body. The great fault of Comte lies in not seeing that the three, though distinct, are yet one; that the distinction, instead of being one of time, is one of eternity; that the harmonious fellow-working — *synergy* (to use a happy term of his own) — of the theological, the metaphysical, the positive elements is essential to the full development of humanity.

S. What are you after? You are not going to swallow my Comte whole and disgorge him an orthodox Trinitarian Christian, surely? Besides, if you are hinting at the Trinity, what have the three stages of development really to say to it?

W. No; you need not be afraid of my proving Comte orthodox. But believing as I do that the divine Three-in-One lies at the foundation of the universe, and therefore of the nature of man made in God's image, I do rejoice when I find a witness to that truth borne, as it

seems to me, in so striking a manner, from so unexpected a quarter.

S. The talk about man being made in God's image appears to me utterly void of meaning. But you don't forget that Comte utterly denies that sheet-anchor of the Christian system, a future life?

W. I deny absolutely that a future life is the sheet-anchor of (as you call it) the Christian system. But I bear in mind the passage you probably refer to from the 6th volume of the Philosophy, about the advantages to be looked for from the general extinction of a chimerical hope, including a great increase of tenderness for human life.* By the way, do you seriously consider this to be a *positive* conclusion?

S. Why not? Philanthrophy does not flow from the doctrine of eternal life, but from the spread of civilization.

W. Why not? Because I have hitherto labored under the delusion, if it be one, that there is no more *positive* conclusion of experience than this, — that the tribes and the individuals who are the most absolutely reckless of human life are those who have never had, or have utterly lost, the notion of an hereafter.

* "The restriction even of all our hopes to real life, individual or collective, may easily supply, under a wise philosophical direction, new means of combining individual impulse with universal advancement, of which the consideration, gradually preponderant, will constitute from thenceforth the sole appropriate way of satisfying as far as possible that need of eternity always inherent in our nature. For instance, that scrupulous respect for human life which has always gone on increasing as our sociability became developed, can certainly but largely increase through the universal extinction of a chimerical hope." — *Phil. Pos.*, Vol. VI. p. 861.

S. Yes, because at present, as a general rule, the most degraded races and individuals, in a still theistic world, are naturally the atheistic. But Comte supposes the conditions reversed.

W. And he argues from a hypothetical future against all the practical results of the past. Is that worthy of Positive Philosophy?

S. Well, it may be a rather bold conclusion. But surely it is but natural that one should value the more that which, once destroyed, can never be replaced?

W. Do you think that the lives of "the beasts that perish" are more valued than those of men?

S. Trusting to be in Inverness-shire on the 12th of August, I am afraid I must say,—No. But then grouse and partridges, and other innocents who have their yearly St. Bartholomew's days of massacre, *are* animals, and we are men, that is the difference.

W. You are obliged to insist upon the difference, whilst yourself taking away one of the most commonly (perhaps not most correctly) received points of difference. Take care lest you make it the interest of every individual or collective tyrant or ruffian to efface that difference more and more. Already, as you know, the black man's right to reckon as part of humanity is denied by scientific Southern Americans. I am afraid the last lingering ground of tenderness for many an African slave's life, when old, or disabled, or refractory, lies in the vague sense that there may be some truth even for him in that "chimerical hope,"—which is a

terror too, — which M. Comte's benevolence would fain see generally extinguished.

S. I must admit that I should feel inclined to leave that side of the doctrine in the background in preaching to a Mississippi slave-owner. It is a strange thing how false doctrines do sometimes have good effects.

W. We will say, then, that "general extinction of a chimerical hope" has at least to be adjourned as respects slave-owners. In the mean while, let me just observe to you, that I think in this instance, as in many others, Comte has been chiefly influenced by his Romanist training. Carelessness about the life of baptized infants in particular, on the ground of their assurance of future bliss, or rapid transit through purgatory, is no doubt very prevalent amongst the poor of Romanist countries; something of the same feeling is even observable amongst our own. I believe that the source of Comte's grossly fallacious conclusion (I cannot use any milder words) lies here. But we have probably spent more time over this detail than it is worth. Now, let me ask you in turn, Is there not something that strikes you in what Comte says of "that need of eternity always inherent in our nature," which, he tells us, is to be satisfied "as far as possible" by the consideration of universal advancement? Why satisfied as far as possible? Why not entirely? How "always inherent in our nature"?

S. Really I cannot feel called upon to justify or to explain all Comte's speculations.

W. Do you admit the "need always inherent in our nature?

S. Well, — probably. I admit a need of eternity so far as humanity is concerned, but not so far as respects individual man. That notion appears to me to flow from a mere inability to think of ourselves as non-existing.

W. I will not press your latter words. But anyhow, once more, why is that need so inherent? Is it a consequent without an antecedent?

S. Impossible.

W. Then where is its antecedent?

S. Well, — I can't tell at present.

W. Again, I will not press you, especially as I suspect we shall pass very nearly by this way again. I will only ask you to reflect whether this consequent, as you admit it to be, does not necessarily imply an antecedent *out* of positive philosophy. For me it is another of those startling admissions of spiritual truth which occur not unfrequently in Comte, and which are all the more remarkable because wrung out of Him by the strength of facts which he is too honest to deny. I say with him that there is a "need of eternity always inherent in our nature." But I say that that need is not only to be satisfied "as far as possible" with the strugglings and stumblings, even if they be always onwards, of our poor humanity, but to be absolutely and wholly fulfilled in the Eternal God Himself. So only do we learn whence that need comes, whither it tends.

S. Yes, but you recollect that the ignoring of the

origin and destination of things is of the very essence of Posititive Philosophy.

W. And are you really satisfied with that?

S. I tell you it was an unspeakable deliverance to me to be able to look facts straight in the face, and study them in their actual relations, without theories of causation or fears of consequences, without the obstacle of religion.

W. Most assuredly, if your theories, or your fears, or your religion, did hinder you from looking facts straight in the face, and studying them in their actual relations, anything or anybody, Comte's philosophy or what not, that rid you from those theories or fears, or that religion, must have been a great deliverance to you. I thought, however, that long before reading Comte you had cast religion aside for "facts"?

S. Yes, but I never quite felt that I was right in doing so till he showed me that I was.

W. The question, however, remains, whether you are right in tabooing metaphysics because your theory was a hindrance to you; or religion, because your religion — or at least religion as you conceived it — was a fear of consequences.

S. Let every one speak well of the bridge that carries him over. I must say that since I became a Comtian I have felt a clearness, a spring in my work that I never knew before.

W. I began by saying that I looked upon Comtianism as having its appointed province, for which it is well fitted. No doubt the practical study of facts is best

carried on by going into it with the lightest possible baggage of theory, by looking as little as possible to consequences and contingencies. One of the most valuable portion of Comte's book is that in which he shows that Positive Philosophy, viewed in this light, is no new discovery, but a method which has been employed more or less consciously by all true men of science and philosophers since the world began. But not less valuable is that in which he insists on the need of theory as essential to observation. You remember, no doubt, the passage?*

S. Yes.

W. So that we are placed, it would seem, in this dilemma: we cannot observe without a theory, cannot perceive the relations of facts without something which runs before our perception and overleaps it, — to use Comte's expressions, primarily directs and finally interprets observation; yet that theory must not be such as to cramp it. I think, if you will consider this, you will see that there is involved in it that interdependence, at least of the positive (or practical) and metaphysical (or psychical) elements, of which I originally spoke. But now I ask you further, why should there be this relation between observation and theory?

* "In whatever order of phenomena it may be, even as towards the most simple, no true observation (*aucune véritable observation*) is possible except as far as it is primarily directed and finally interpreted by some theory. . . . It is henceforth evident, from a purely scientific point of view, that every isolated, entirely empirical observation, is essentially idle, and even radically uncertain; science can only employ those which connect themselves, at least hypothetically, with some law; it is such a connection which constitutes the chief characteristic difference between the observations of the man of science and those of the vulgar." — *Phil. Pos.*, Vol. IV. p. 418.

S. Because, as Comte tells you, observation would not otherwise be true.

W. Why should it be true?

S. Why? —

W. Shall I help you to an answer? Because truth must lie at the bottom of all things.

S. No, by no means. You forget that the denial of absolute truth is essential to the Comtian system.

W. I believe that the recognition of an absolute truth underlies it all.

S. How is it possible for you to prove that?

W. Surely all the Comtian philosophy turns upon this, that things stand in some true relation to each other.

S. No; not "true."

W. Correct.

S. Say "actual."

W. Very well, — it is a word we have used already, — that things stand in some actual relation to each other, which relation is capable of discovery by man. His philosophy, in short, is not sceptical, but dogmatical.

S. Quite so.

W. And his whole effort is to reduce all historical, social, &c. phenomena, as far as possible, to the same precise relations as exist in mathematics.

S. What then?

W. If there are these true, or correct, or actual relations between things, which are capable of discovery, amongst all the false, or incorrect, or apparent relations which we think to see, then is there something absolute

beneath all phenomena of relation, which something other men call truth; and faith, unswerving faith, in the existence of such absolutely correct relations, as underlying all phenomena, is the sole guiding clew to the Positive Philosopher. He starts from the necessary existence of such correct or actual relations, as from a universal antecedent; otherwise he would have no certainty to look forward to, no object of search in his observations. And thus Comte, though apparently an Aristotelian, and certainly an open opponent of Platonism, is in fact a Platonist at bottom; only that the absolute which he has faith in, and is searching for, is one not in the things themselves, but in the relations of them. And this absolute of relation — if one may use a term seemingly self-repugnant — may in like manner be connected with the whole theory of Platonic ideas, as applied to relations, except that these would float as it were unsphered, having no Divine essence for their dwelling-place.

S. Pardon me if I insist on turning a deaf ear — as far as I can — to your metaphysics. But, supposing I admit all that you say about correct or actual relations, there would still be an enormous gap between the existence of such actual relations and that of an absolute truth. Of course there is some one relation in which things actually do stand to each other, and there may be an infinite number of others in which they only seem to stand, but do not stand: all Comte says is, that man can discover that actual relation.

W. Generalize what you have just been saying, and

I think you will feel that I have misrepresented nothing. You seem to have been speaking of things in pairs; think of them in their universality. All things, which seem to be related together in all manner of phenomenal, fallacious ways, are in fact actually related together in a certain κόσμος of solely correct relations, which underlies the apparent κόσμος, and that underlying κόσμος is discoverable by man. Surely I am only using a different phraseology from that of your school when I say that this view implies that truth is at the ground of all things.

S. Well, suppose I admitted that there is no medium between mere useless, purposeless, hopeless Pyrrhonism and the acknowledgment of a necessary Truth as being at the ground of all things?

W. You would not yet be at the end of the series of questions which the mere admission of "actual" relations between things opens up. For how is it that man perceives these actual relations? how is it that he perceives those which are not actual? how is it that he is deceived by the one set, enlightened by the other? how is it that he is capable of discovering that he is deceived or enlightened? Reflect upon it, and I think you will see that the acknowledgment of a necessary truth, though only consisting for you primarily in the actual relations of all things to one another, involves the recognition of it as either (1.) a metaphysical entity, in which shape I think you will find the conception utterly unsatisfactory, or (2.) as a God of Truth, who, and not which, is *the* ground of all things. In other words, Comtianism, for

all its pretensions, necessarily involves a πού στῶ out of itself, an antecedent which transcends the whole series of its consequents. I hold it to be nothing more than a convenient method for practical science, which has been puffed out into a universal theory. In its cool denials of causation and purpose in the world, it always puts me in mind of a child who, finding that to eat a herring or a mackerel it is handy to cut off the head and the tail, should fancy that there was no use in either appendage, as being utterly unprofitable for the "positive philosophy" of his dinner; whereas without them the fish would never have breathed or fed or swum, and he would have had no dinner at all.

S. You surely don't hold that Comtianism implies Christianity? Was there ever a man who judged religion so dispassionately, indifferently, so entirely *ab extra* as Comte?

W. I see that Comtianism, so far as it has anything "positive" or practical in it, is pervaded by Christianity, rests upon it, looks up to it, and in Christianity lives, moves, and has its being. But then it is Christianity according to the Romanist pattern. As to Protestantism, so far from looking at it dispassionately and indifferently, Comte never can look at it without prejudice. So blind is he to the spiritual strength which it contains, that he looks upon the English faith as having died out whilst Milton was singing its swan-dirge in "Paradise Lost"; entirely ignoring that mighty movement of religious regeneration led, in the eighteenth century, among the many by the Wesleys and Whitfield, among the few

by William Law, and which, as it takes hold by degrees of the vitals of the Anglican Church, gives birth, through Alexander Knox to the Anglo-Catholic, through Simeon to the Evangelical, through Coleridge to what may be called the essentially theological school of our renewed Divinity. Whilst this marvellous movement is going on, which threw up, as I believe, the most effective barrier for all Europe against the anarchic tendencies of the French eighteenth century, what does Comte see in England? Nothing but just such influences as might happen to square in with his theory of historic development into positivism, — Hume, Adam Smith, the Scotch School of Philosophy, and, at last, Byron and Walter Scott. In a word, the deep, vital meaning of a century of English history is obscured for him by his system.

S. But it is precisely from all chance of bewilderment between Tractarianism, and Evangelicalism, and Coleridgeanism, that I feel so happy to have been delivered by Positive Philosophy.

W. Are you delivered from them by it?

S. Yes, as much as in faithfully studying a wild-flower I am delivered from speculations as to how vegetable life came to exist, or what is to be the end of it.

W. If your study, in very proportion to its faithfulness, does not lead you backwards and forwards, sooner or later, to such puzzles or others, you must have a very differently constituted mind from almost every great student of nature that has ever lived. But don't you see that by such a use of Positive Philosophy you reduce it to a mere recipe for self-forgetfulness, a sleep from all

highest and deepest questionings — a sort of wilful philosophic drunkenness with the outward and visible? And indeed, I believe it is precisely such an influence which it has exercised, and is exercising, upon the contemporary art and literature of France. Viewed closely, it seems to me the Epicurism of the nineteenth century.

S. I thought you began by saying that Comte had settled down to his true level in France?

W. Comte has, and Comtianism as a system. But the ignoring of the above and the below; the absorption in the material, temporary, visible, is one of the evil influences of this age and of all ages, which it has simply been given to him to deck with a new name, to shape into a new system. Comte is but one of the products of that influence, as were Feuerbach and Bruno Bauer, and Stirner, as is, above all, Louis Napoleon, fit king for such a priesthood.

S. I don't know where to have you. Sometimes you seem to approve of Comtianism, sometimes you denounce it. You spoke of Comte a little while back as an honest man; now he is a priest of evil.

W. There is no real contradiction. I repeat that, as a method of observation and study, Positive Philosophy appears to me very valuable; but it must rest on something below, it must look to something above. So far as it attempts to stand by itself, it must crumble into the grossest materialism; so far as it is sought to be set up as a creed, it must lead to the most crushing despotism. So I believe Comte, as a man of science, as an observer, to have been singularly honest; but so

far as he seeks to raise Positive Philosophy upon the ruins of all religion and all metaphysics, I accept your words, and I denounce him as a priest of evil.

S. I cannot see why Positive Philosophy should not stand by itself, upon the basis of those facts with which alone it deals.

W. Because facts are perpetually leading us out of themselves; because the visible has its roots in the invisible, the known in the unknown, the world and man in God. Take, for instance (I must revert to a point I touched on before), those wants and tendencies of human nature which Comte is too sincere not to recognize, — that "inherent need of eternity," or again, that "instinctive predilection for order and harmony," which he speaks of in his sixth volume; or still again, what he calls in the same volume, in the teeth of his own earliest formulæ, the "great destination" of man's action over nature. Is it possible to stop short with him at such a need, such a predilection, such a destination, without asking whence and whither? What is eternity? Is it a fact within the domain of Positive Philosophy? Is it a conception? Why should human nature have an inherent need of a conception? Why are order and harmony? Why has man a destination?

S. Facts! I must once more recall you to facts! confine yourself to facts! facts in their successions! facts in their similitudes!

W. Do you think you can silence these obstinate questionings of man's spirit by that parrot-cry of "facts!" "confine yourself to facts"? — "Confine myself to

facts?" the spirit answers; "Why, I struggle to do so, but they will not let me; they drive me away from them to where they seem facts no longer, but mere shadows and semblances of mightier realities, of a world unseen, of a kingdom which cannot be moved. Facts! But your participle implies a verb, *quis fecit?* Who made these facts which you tell me to study, and wherefore were they made? You bid me observe succession; but where is the first, and where the last? You bid me dwell on similitude; but where is the pattern from whence it flows, the standard whereby it is to be measured? You speak of order and harmony; I crave for them; I have glimpses of them every now and then, never lasting, never satisfying; merely as flashes from a hidden realm of light. But as often that order and harmony seem to have entirely vanished amid disorder and confusion inextricable, or else they are themselves stern, pitiless, crushing. I cannot believe in them when I miss their presence; I cannot cherish them when I feel them grating on me and overwhelming me, unless I believe in a quenchless source from which they spring, in an unseen sphere wherein they dwell, in an abiding Power which uses them with unfailing wisdom, for purposes of all-embracing love. Give me that faith, and I shall be able, with the great Florentine, to see written on the very gates of everlasting woe the words of fire, —

> 'Fecemi la Divina Potestate,
> La Somma Sapienza e'l Primo Amore.'

Deny me that faith, and if I am to forego all looking

before and after; if I am to shut myself up with the everlasting riddle of this universe, having no other occupation than to observe the relations between 'my first,' 'my second,' 'my third,' and 'my whole,' carefully abstaining from the word itself, I tell you that two pennyworth of gin will give me an easier and pleasanter *anæsthesia* than all your Positive Philosophy!"

S. Come, come, Williams, a little less indignant eloquence. You are most unfair towards Comte, who certainly advocates no *anæsthesia* for the purpose of deadening action, but only seeks to stimulate it by cutting off deadening influences. But, anyhow, admitting that possibly there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of even in Comte's philosophy, still that is no reason for not making what use of it one can.

W. Certainly; that is precisely what I asked you to do.

S. Comte $+ x$, I confess, is my present stand-point. It may be that Positive Philosophy stretches far beyond the limits assigned to it by its author. It may be, though I don't see it, that the realm of facts which is cognizable by it includes God, a spiritual world, a life everlasting. It may be, though I can't conceive it, that the doctrine of the Trinity, or that of the Atonement, expresses a true relation of facts within such realm. But, in the mean while, can you deny the grasp which Positive Philosophy has laid on the facts of the past, — the pregnant fruitfulness, for instance, of the

theory as to the three stages of religious development, fetishism, polytheism, monotheism?

W. Once more; so far as Positive Philosophy has evolved any new truth, I am most glad to recognize and to use it. The distinction between these three stages undoubtedly affords a most valuable hint for the study of history, besides offering an additional witness to that cardinal truth of which I have so often reminded you.

S. You seem to me really Trinity-mad, as Spinoza was said to be God-drunk. It is impossible for a man to use any threefold classification without your seeing at once some testimony to your pet dogma. What a mere succession of three periods has to say to a mystery of three coeternals, I cannot well divine.

W. Pardon me; I do not admit that the hint I spoke of is one simply of a succession of periods. I believe the value of it lies precisely in this, that it points to three essential sides or faces of religious faith and truth, which is incomplete, unless it embraces all three.

S. Mercy on us! — what next? Do you mean to say that fetishism and polytheism are essential elements of religion?

W. I mean that both fetishism and polytheism are mere outward phenomena, corresponding each, like monotheism, to a single side of truth, and each imperfect on that account. The side of truth which lies beneath fetishism is, that God is to be seen in nature; that nature is all divine. The corruption of that truth is, that this or that object in nature, or all nature, is God. The side of truth which lies beneath poly-

theism is, that there is distinction of functions, of personality, in God. The corruption of that truth is, that the distinct persons are individual Gods; that their distinct functions may jar and thwart each other. The side of truth which lies beneath monotheism is, that there is a Divine unity overruling all. The corruption of that truth is, that such unity is a barren and abstract one, separate from all besides. The conciliation of all these fragmentary truths lies, I once more repeat it, in the revelation of the Divine Three-in-One, eternally self-manifested in creation. Without this conciliation — without the synergy, to use once more the Comtian term — of these three principles of religious faith, religion is forever turning upon itself, and unmitigated fetishism is its last state, as in man's degradation it is its first. Every one admits that the act of the Italian brigand in covering his Madonna's face during the commission of his crimes, is an act of fetishism; and yet such fetishism is the product of that so-called Romish monotheism, most inappropriately, indeed, as I think, so termed by Comte, but which he has scarcely words enough to admire. The close connection between fetishism and positivism, you will recollect, is clearly and repeatedly set forth by Comte himself.* And, could one conceive of the Positivist worship becoming anywhere prevalent, what but pure fetishism would be,

* "Taking complete positivity as the normal type of our mental maturity, the fetishist is less distant from it than any theologist." "The better one compares fetishism and positivism, the more one recognizes their fundamental affinity." — *Système de Politique Positive*, Vol. III. pp. 85, 119; and see Vol. IV. p. 43.

for the great bulk of mankind, the result of that combination of "signs, images, and feelings" — from the statue of the Mother-and-child, as the symbol of the goddess Humanity, downwards — which is to constitute the new worship? Do you really think that the "Great Being," the "continuous sum of all convergent beings," * — that "Humanity," the "sum of human beings past, future, and present" (exclusive, indeed, of those not really "assimilable," but inclusive of "worthy animal auxiliaries" †), are likely to elicit much fervent adoration? Whereas, indeed, many a poor old dame, who had worshipped a Romish Mother-and-child all her life, might easily be brought to worship a Positivist one, without finding out the difference. . . . . .

S. You forget that the Comtian use of symbols is only to help one's thoughts and feelings, and is without anything of the fetishist's notion, that there is a virtue in them which will communicate itself to us.

W. The very plea for all image-worship, used by all enlightened Romanists, Brahmins, Buddhists, &c., and which results invariably for the multitude in the deadest superstition. The question of the use of symbols itself is, indeed, a far deeper one, into which we need not enter. But observe, again, how prone Comtianism must be to relic-worship. In that adoration of the dead which it inculcates, will not the effort to "contemplate habitually the catastrophe which deprived us of them" ‡ lead

* *Système de Politique Positive*, Vol. IV. p. 30.

† *Catéchisme Positiviste*, pp. 30, 31.

‡ "For each of these beings objectively extinct, we should not fear to

naturally to the use of any skinny fragments of departed mortality which may serve to quicken and fix that contemplation? May not Positivism sink thus again into the most ghastly fetishism?

S. Not until it wholly belies the intentions of its founder.

W. Well, — ask yourself, for I will not myself claim the answer from you: Which worship is really worthiest of man, and most appropriate to his nature, — the public ceremonies by which the "necessary" fusion of fetishism and positivism is to be achieved, and due homage paid to a goddess slave to death, "fatally impotent against outward laws," * or the private efforts of "cerebral evocation," by which the dead are to be "supposed" alive,† on the one hand, — or, on the other, the sharing at the communion rails of the nourishing bread and the quickening wine, the ever-renewed symbols of a solemn victory of life over death, in the benefits of which all are called upon to participate? I tell you that that bread and that wine will serve as spiritual food and drink to far-off generations, amongst which the words of Positive Philosophy shall sound but as the faint echo, in an unknown tongue, of a forgotten voice.

contemplate habitually the catastrophe which deprived us of them." — *Politique Positive,* Vol. IV. p. 119.

* "Each time I see thus disappear before the time a really superior being, I deplore the fatal impotence of humanity against outward laws (*la fatale impuissance de l'humanité contre les lois extérieures*), which rob her of her best organs."—*Politique Positive*, Vol. III. p. xvii.

† "Far from forgetting thee, I must endeavor to suppose thee alive, in order that we may continue to identify ourselves more and more." — (Invocation to Madame de Vaux.) *Ibid.*, Vol. I. p. xvi.

Note. — In the former issue of this Tract reference was made to a statement published by M. Pierre Leroux, that Comte used to perform his daily worship to Humanity after Madame Clotilde de Vaux's death, before her two arms crossed over her portrait. This has been denied, in no measured terms, by two members of the Positivist school, as "a gross falsehood," a "gross and silly calumny." From what I know of Comte's life and writings, I can see no antecedent improbability in the story (a passage in the "Politique Positive," Vol. IV. p. 437, as to *post-mortem* examinations, to which I am referred by Mr. R. Congreve, being, as it seems to me, entirely beside the question as to a matter of worship); whilst of the portrait itself Comte speaks (*Ibid.* p. 554) as "perhaps destined to supply soon to regenerate souls the best emblem of the Great Being." Of the good faith of the author of the article in which the statement appeared (M. Luc Desages), or of that of M. Pierre Leroux himself, I have no doubt; the story appears to have been currently believed by persons well acquainted with Comte, and who were in a position to know the truth; and it seems to offer the only clew I am aware of to the meaning of a passage in his invocation to her, about his recollections of her being fortified by a "characteristic correspondence." But as the anecdote, as such, is wholly immaterial to my argument, from the moment it is put in question, I prefer, of course, withdrawing all reference to it.

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